This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

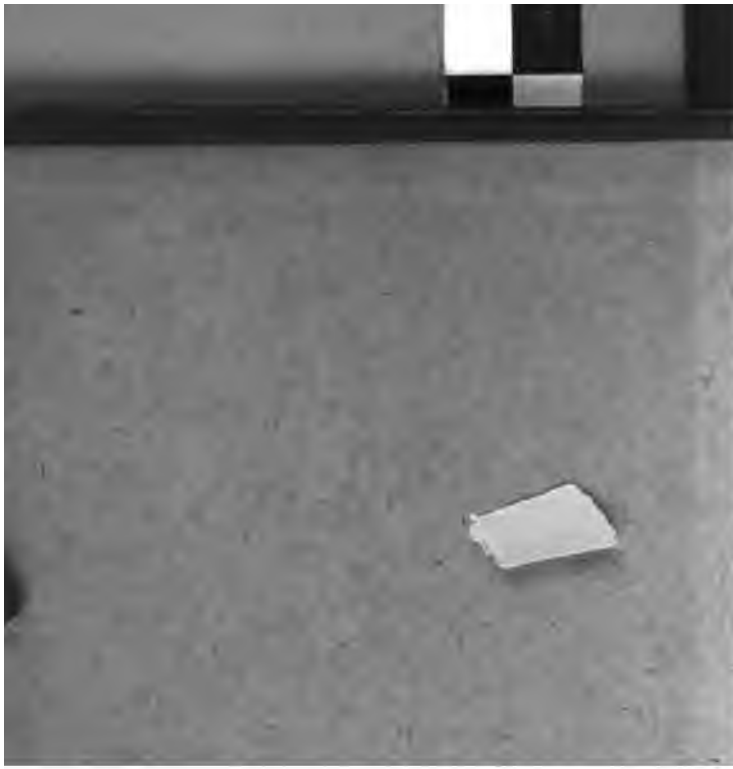
We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

Do not replace
CIRCULATION NOTED
JUL 9 1958



THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

Copyright 1902 by J.D.A.

Croxley Edition

The Works of Honoré de Balzac

VOLUMES XXV-XXVI

The Thirteen
Father Goriot
And Other Stories

Society of English and French Literature
New York

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
2162074
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R 1925 L

CONTENTS

PART I

PAGE

INTRODUCTION - - - - - - ix

THE THIRTEEN:

(*Histoire des Treize*; Translator, ELLEN MARRIAGE)

AUTHOR'S PREFACE - - - - - 1

I. FERRAGUS - - - - - -

II. THE DUCHESSE DE LANGEAIS - - - 13

III. THE GIRL WITH THE GOLDEN EYES - - 281

PART II

INTRODUCTION - - - - - - ix

FATHER GORIOT - - - - - - 1

(*Le Père Goriot*; Translator, ELLEN MARRIAGE)

THE UNCONSCIOUS HUMORISTS - - - 287

(*Les Comédiens sans le Savoir*; Translator, ELLEN MARRIAGE)

PARISIANS IN THE COUNTRY:

(*Les Parisiens en Province*; Translator, JAMES WARING)

GAUDISSART THE GREAT - - - - 351

25X398

INTRODUCTION*

[*Histoire des Treize* consists of I. *Ferragus, Chef des Dévorants;* II. *La Duchesse de Langeais;* III. *La Fille aux Yeux d'Or.* The first part, with the preface, appeared in the *Revue de Paris,* March and April, 1833. It was divided into four chapters, which became five when the story, along with its companions and under the present collective title, entered the "Scènes de la Vie Parisienne" in 1834. These divisions were suppressed in the edition of 1839. In 1843 the novelette entered the "Comedy." A fragment entitled "Le Cimetière du Père-Lachaise et son Portier" appeared in the *Magasin Universel,* December, 1836. The first chapter of the second part, under the title, not of "La Duchesse de Langeais," but of "Ne Touchez Pas la Hache" was issued in No. 1 of *L'Écho de la Jeune France,* March, 1833. The complete story appeared among the "Parisian Scenes" of 1834, divided into four chapters. In the edition, with "Ferragus," of 1839, these chapter divisions were suppressed, and the title was changed to its present form. It entered the "Comedy" in 1843. The third story appeared in the "Scènes de la Vie Parisienne" of 1834-35, divided into three chapters, the first of which, "Physiognomies Parisiennes," ended Vol. III. of the "Scenes," and the two remaining opened Vol. IV. The first chapter contained fragments of two previously published articles, "Le Petit Mercier" and "Les Jeunes Gens de Paris." In 1843 the story, joined to the two others, entered the "Comedy," chapter divisions being as usual suppressed. With

*Copyright, 1900, by Thomas Y. Crowell & Company.

regard to the characters a few words will suffice. Of the "Thirteen," their chief Ferragus is found nowhere else; de Marsay appears in over twelve other books; Montriveau in five; the Marquis de Ronquerolles in six. M. and Mme. Jules are seen again for a moment in "César Birotteau." The Duchess de Langeais reappears in "Père Goriot." Paul de Manerville is familiar from "Le Contrat de Mariage." The Dukes de Chaulieu and Grandlieu need no comment. The name of the Duke de Navarreins is also familiar. For the Princess de Blamont-Chauvry see "Madame Firmiani" and "Le Lys dans la Vallée"; for Mme. Gruget, "Les Employés" and "Un Ménage de Garçon"; for the Baroness de Maulincour, "Le Contrat de Mariage"; for the Vidame de Pamiers, "Le Cabinet des Antiques"; for Mme. de Sérizy, "Splendeurs et Misères" and several other stories; for Sixte du Châtelet, "Illusions Perdues" and "Splendeurs et Misères." Lord Dudley is already familiar from "Le Lys dans la Vallée."

with delight, since it was filling Paris with enthusiasm and had cost him great labor. He denied that his heroine was his Fornarina—he had his Fornarina, but he would never paint her. Later we find him groaning over having to finish "cette bêtise de *la Fille aux Yeux d'Or*," the central fact of which he exposes to Mme. Hanska in very plain French. He also lets her know that he himself inhabits an apartment furnished like the now famous boudoir of Paquita Valdèz.

It will be observed that Balzac's critical instinct made him perceive that "La Duchesse de Langeais" was by far the most important of his three connected stories. On this point most readers are in agreement. Yet each story has distinct merits, and together they make a volume that appeals greatly to persons who care for sensational romance. It is the fashion to sneer at the interest attaching to this kind of fiction, but it is well for a novelist to have a "Histoire des Treize" among his works, on which jaded readers can fall back, and from which new readers can receive an impetus to attack other and more serious books. Besides, it must be remembered that Balzac, after his youthful period of extravagant writing was over, never failed to introduce an element of realism into his sensational books that lifted them far above the *genre* of fiction to which they primarily belonged.

Even in "Ferragus" the sensationalism is not unmixed. The remarkable power wielded by the ex-convict and his associates, the mysterious vengeance visited upon the inquisitive Maulincour, the strange misfortunes of M. and Mme. Jules, the death of the latter and the fate that befell her corpse, are all sufficiently sensational, and hold so little by actual life that an analytically-minded reader can easily find the faults such a reader loves to discover. More fortunate are those who can enjoy the thrilling pages without asking whether this or that would really be likely to happen; but it would surely require the blindness of partisanship to maintain that the power of

the "Thirteen" and the secrecy of their movements are not exaggerated. Ferragus, of course, belongs to the same class of "superior" men as Argow and Vautrin, but he is nearer to the former than to the latter. On the other hand, what merely sensational novelist could have given us the pages on the streets of Paris, the description of Parisians caught in a shower, the sketch of the beggars of the great city, of its lorettes, and of its craze for building? Who else could have written so about the love of young men, marriages for love, women's "white lies," and the like, if not the great analyst, whose description of Mme. Jules' chamber recalls, by the way, the "Physiologie du Mariage," one of the earliest analytic studies?

Yes, even in this sensational story Balzac is still Balzac. He gives us the fine pages on the *Dies Iræ* and on Père Lachaise to balance the romantic death of Mme. Jules and the rather absurd mystery and commotion attending her crema-

reason for the wife's dying because her husband has played the spy. The conduct of Maulincour is, to be sure, detestable in a man who associates with gentlemen, but it is not unnatural enough to weaken the story, and he certainly pays the penalty of his offences.

The sensational element is much weaker in "La Duchesse de Langeais" than in "Ferragus." The "Thirteen" play practically no part save in the abduction of the Duchess from the ball and in the removal of her corpse from the convent—a performance which is described with much verve. The opening pages are romantic in a high degree and are filled with a fascination that would, alone, render the story memorable, but it probably derives its main effectiveness from the fact that it gives one of the most vivid portrayals of a true coquette to be found in literature. The character of General Montriveau, which is not lacking in romantic elements, is excellent; the whole course of his love affair with the Duchess is well described; some of the situations are presented with wonderful power; but after all it is the description of the Duchess herself that dominates the imagination of the reader. However much he may blame her for her heartlessness and folly, he cannot help admitting that the women of 1830 to 1840 were entirely right in seeing in Balzac the best interpreter of their sex in fiction that France at least had produced. At the close of the century he still remains unsurpassed. Mme. de Langeais, Mme. Firmiani, Mme. de Maufrigneuse, and Mme. d'Espard are four fascinating society queens to whom Balzac's admirers owe as unreserved allegiance as the Parisian *jeunesse* gave did two generations ago. We must condemn at least two of them as unreservedly as we admit their fascination; but this fact does not lessen the praise due to their creator. And of this quartette the most fascinating is the heroine of the present story, although the Duchess de Maufrigneuse has played a romantic part in "Le Cabinet des Antiques," and

is destined, as the Princess de Cadignan, to arouse our interest to a marked degree.

It is needless to dilate upon the beauty of the opening description of the little Spanish town or upon the pages devoted to the effects of Sister Thérèse's organ-playing and singing—pages that prelude the rhapsodies on music contained in "Gambara" and "Massimilla Doni." It would be equally idle to dwell on the remarkable description of the aristocracy of the Faubourg Saint-Germain. Its length may be disproportionate to that of the story proper, but the whole discussion goes far toward disproving the assertions of those critics who declare that Balzac knew nothing about aristocratic life. He at least knew enough about it to give a most masterly analysis of the reasons why the nobility of the Restoration were not able to maintain the high station held by their forefathers. Other fine pages are those that describe how the Duchess uses the confessional to tantalize Montriveau, those that differen-

for the general public. But Balzac was the Secretary of Society, and unfortunately society has never been able completely to stamp out certain nameless vices. Hence Balzac felt impelled to construct what have been called the dark closets of his great edifice. It is noticeable that all the chief characters of this story—for Paul de Manerville hardly counts—represent mixed or non-European races. Perhaps this fact is due to Balzac's desire to give an exceptional passion an exceptional setting, and not to any patriotic belief that a vice which flourished in Lesbos could not make even a sporadic appearance in France. Be this as it may, it cannot be denied that the great writer has succeeded in giving his story a thoroughly Oriental flavor without removing his characters from that Paris which is described, along with its population, in pages that rival in poetic power any others in the "Comedy." As for the characters, it will readily be granted that they are worthy of their setting. De Marsay and Paquita are as well-framed in their luxurious boudoir as Don Juan and Haidée are in their island grotto. The hero is indeed something of a Don Juan, and his father, Lord Dudley, is as destitute of morals as any of the boon companions of the Prince Regent who have attained celebrity in the scandalous annals of a generation that hypocritically cast out Byron. That Balzac was guilty of exaggeration in his description of de Marsay is a charge that we need not deny nor consider seriously. Heroes of his type must always be exaggerated, and because we do not now make use of such heroes in fiction is no reason why we should not endeavor to sympathize with the literature of the past so as in part at least to comprehend and enjoy them. De Marsay and his fellows of the "Thirteen" are perhaps not much further removed from life than the idealized mountaineers and negroes about whom we read with avidity. Preceptors like the Abbé Maronis are fortunately rare, but they are not unknown. Jealousy like that of the Marchioness de

San-Réal is a phenomenon sufficiently well known to physicians and criminal lawyers. There is enough of real life in "La Fille aux Yeux d'Or" to make us admire its great power, if we are sufficiently venturous to read it, and also to cause us to deplore the fact that man who can lift himself almost to the level of the angels should often abase himself far below the level of the brutes that perish.

W. P. Trent.

THE THIRTEEN

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

In the Paris of the Empire there were found Thirteen men equally impressed with the same idea, equally endowed with energy enough to keep them true to it, while among themselves they were loyal enough to keep faith even when their interests chanced to clash. They were strong enough to set themselves above all laws; bold enough to shrink from no enterprise; and lucky enough to succeed in nearly everything that they undertook. So profoundly politic were they, that they could dissemble the tie which bound them together. They ran the greatest risks, and kept their failures to themselves. Fear never entered into their calculations; not one of them had trembled before princes, before the executioner's axe, before innocence. They had taken each other as they were, regardless of social prejudices. Criminals they doubtless were, yet none the less were they all remarkable for some one of the virtues which go to the making of great men, and their numbers were filled up only from among picked recruits. Finally, that nothing should be lacking to complete the dark, mysterious romance of their history, nobody to this day knows who they were. The Thirteen once realized all the wildest ideas conjured up by tales of the occult powers of a Manfred, a Faust, or a Melmoth; and to-day the band is broken up or, at any rate, dispersed. Its members have quietly returned beneath the yoke of the Civil Code; much as Morgan, the Achilles of piracy, gave up buccaneering to be a peaceable planter; and, untroubled by qualms of conscience, sat himself down by the fireside to dispose of blood-stained booty acquired by the red light of blazing towns.

After Napoleon's death, the band was dissolved by a chan event which the author is bound for the present to pass ov in silence, and its mysterious existence, as curious, it may b as the darkest novel by Mrs. Radcliffe, came to an end.

It was only lately that the present writer, detecting, he fancied, a faint desire for celebrity in one of the anonymo heroes to whom the whole band once owed an occult all giance, received the somewhat singular permission to ma public certain of the adventures which befell that band, pr vided that, while telling the story in his own fashion, he o served certain limits.

The aforesaid leader was still an apparently young ma with fair hair and blue eyes, and a soft, thin voice whi might seem to indicate a feminine temperament. His fa was pale, his ways mysterious. He chatted pleasantly, a told me that he was only just turned of forty. He might ha belonged to any one of the upper classes. The name whi he gave was probably assumed, and no one answering to h description was known in society. Who is he, do you o

of heads taken off in secret have been confided to him. If any reader has not had enough of the ghastly tales served up to the public for some time past, he has only to express his wish; the author is in a position to reveal cold-blooded atrocities and family secrets of a gloomy and astonishing nature. But in preference he has chosen those pleasanter stories in which stormy passions are succeeded by purer scenes, where the beauty and goodness of woman shine out the brighter for the darkness. And, to the honor of the Thirteen, such episodes as these are not wanting. Some day perhaps it may be thought worth while to give their whole history to the world; in which case it might form a pendant to the history of the buccaneers—that race apart so curiously energetic, so attractive in spite of their crimes.

When a writer has a true story to tell, he should scorn to turn it into a sort of puzzle toy, after the manner of those novelists who take their reader for a walk through one cavern after another to show him a dried-up corpse at the end of the fourth volume, and inform him, by way of conclusion, that he has been frightened all along by a door hidden somewhere or other behind some tapestry; or a dead body, left by inadvertence, under the floor. So the present chronicler, in spite of his objection to prefaces, felt bound to introduce his fragment by a few remarks.

Ferragus, the first episode, is connected by invisible links with the history of the Thirteen, for the power which they acquired in a natural manner provides the apparently supernatural machinery.

Again, although a certain literary coquetry may be permissible to retailers of the marvelous, the sober chronicler is bound to forego such advantage as he may reap from an odd-sounding name, on which many ephemeral successes are founded in these days. Wherefore the present writer gives the following succinct statement of the reasons which induced him to adopt the unlikely sounding title and sub-title.

In accordance with old-established custom, *Ferragus* is a name taken by the head of a guild of *Dévorants, id est*

Devoirants or journeymen. Every chief on the day of his election chooses a pseudonym and continues a dynasty of *Dévorants* precisely as a pope changes his name on his accession to the triple tiara; and as the Church has its Clement XIV., Gregory XII., Julius II., or Alexander VI., so the workmen have their *Trempe-la-Soupe IX., Ferragus XXII., Tutanus XIII,* or *Masche-Fer IV.* Who are the *Dévorants,* do you ask?

The *Dévorants* are one among many tribes of compagnons whose origin can be traced to a great mystical association formed among the workmen of Christendom for the rebuilding of the Temple at Jerusalem. *Compagnonnage* is still a popular institution in France. Its traditions still exert a power over little enlightened minds, over men so uneducated that they have not learned to break their oaths; and the various organizations might be turned to formidable account even yet if any rough-hewn man of genius arose to make use of them, for his instruments would be, for the most part, almost blind.

A great many curious things might be told of their rivals, the *Compagnons du Devior,* of all the different sects of workmen, their manners and customs and brotherhoods, and of the resemblances between them and the Freemasons; but here, these particulars would be out of place. The author will merely add, that before the Revolution a Trempe-la-Soupe had been known in the King's service, which is to say, that he had the tenure of a place in His Majesty's galleys for one hundred and one years; but even thence he ruled his guild, and was religiously consulted on all matters, and if he escaped from the hulks he met with help, succor, and respect wherever he went. To have a chief in the hulks is one of those misfortunes for which Providence is responsible; but a faithful lodge of *dévorants* is bound, as before, to obey a power created by and set above themselves. Their lawful sovereign is in exile for the time being, but none the less is he their king. And now any romantic mystery hanging about the words *Ferragus* and the *dévorants* is completely dispelled.

As for the Thirteen, the author feels that, on the strength of the details of this almost fantastic story, he can afford to give away yet another prerogative, though it is one of the greatest on record, and would possibly fetch a high price if brought into a literary auction mart; for the owner might inflict as many volumes on the public as La Contemporaine.*

The Thirteen were all of them men tempered like Byron's friend Trelawney, the original (so it is said) of *The Corsair.* All of them were fatalists, men of spirit and poetic temperament; all of them were tired of the commonplace life which they led; all felt attracted towards Asiatic pleasures by all the vehement strength of newly awakened and long dormant forces. One of these, chancing to take up *Venice Preserved* for the second time, admired the sublime friendship between Pierre and Jaffir, and fell to musing on the virtues of outlaws, the loyalty of the hulks, the honor of thieves, and the immense power that a few men can wield if they bring their

*A long series of so-called Memoirs, which appeared about 1830.

whole minds to bear upon the carrying out of a single t
It struck him that the individual man rose higher than r
Then he began to think that if a few picked men sho
band themselves together; and if, to natural wit, and ed
tion, and money, they could join a fanaticism hot eno
to fuse, as it were, all these separate forces into a single
then the whole world would be at their feet. From
time forth, with a tremendous power of concentration, t
could wield an occult power against which the organiza
of society would be helpless; a power which would push
stacles aside and defeat the will of others; and the dia
ical power of all would be at the service of each. A hos
world apart within the world, admitting none of the id
recognizing none of the laws of the world; submitting
to the sense of necessity, obedient only from devotion; ac
all as one man in the interests of the comrade who sho
claim the aid of the rest; a band of buccaneers with carri
and yellow kid gloves; a close confederacy of men of

they possessed in common; they had their feet in every salon, their hands in every strong box, their elbows in the streets, their heads upon all pillows, they did not scruple to help themselves at their pleasure. No chief commanded them, nobody was strong enough. The liveliest passion, the most urgent need took precedence—that was all. They were thirteen unknown kings; unknown, but with all the power and more than the power of kings; for they were both judges and executioners, they had taken wings that they might traverse the heights and depths of society, scorning to take any place in it, since all was theirs. If the author learns the reason of their abdication, he will communicate it.

And now the author is free to give those episodes in the History of the Thirteen which, by reason of the Parisian favor of the details or the strangeness of the contrasts, possessed a peculiar attraction for him.

PARIS, 1832.

THE THIRTEEN

I.

FERRAGUS

CHEF DES DEVORANTS

To Hector Berlioz.

THERE are streets in Paris which have lost their character as hopelessly as a man guilty of some shameful action; there are likewise noble streets, streets that are simply honest and nothing more, young streets as to whose morality the public as yet has formed no opinion, and streets older than the oldest dowager. Then there are deadly streets, respectable streets, streets that are always clean, and streets that are invariably filthy; artisan, industrial, and commercial streets. The streets of Paris, in short, possess human qualities, so that you cannot help forming certain ideas of them on a first impression. There are low streets where you would not care to linger, and streets in which you would like to live. Some, like the Rue Montmartre, for instance, turn a fair front on you at the first and end in a fish's tail. The Rue de la Paix is a wide and imposing street, but it arouses none of the nobly gracious thoughts which take a susceptible nature at unawares in the Rue Royale, while it certainly lacks the majesty which pervades the Place Vendôme.

If you take your walks abroad through the Ile Saint-Louis, the loneliness of the spot, the dreary look of the houses and great empty mansions is enough to account for the melancholy which settles on your nerves. The Ile Saint-Louis, a corpse

no longer tenanted by farmers-general, is the Venice of Paris. The Place de la Bourse is garrulous, bustling, common; it is only beautiful by moonlight; an epitomized Paris in broad day, by night a dreamlike vision of ancient Greece.

Is not the Rue Traversière Saint-Honoré plainly a shameless street, with its villainous little houses a couple of windows in width, and vice, and crime, and misery on every floor? And there are thoroughfares with a north aspect, visited by the sun only three or four times in the year; deadly streets are they, where life is taken with impunity, and the law looks on and never interferes. In olden days the Parlement would probably have summoned the lieutenant of police to hear a little plain speaking, or at least they would have passed a vote of censure on the street, just as on another occasion they recorded their dissatisfaction with the perukes worn by the Chapter of Beauvais. Yet, M. Benoiston de Châteauneuf has shown conclusively that the mortality in certain streets is twice as high as the normal death-rate! And to sum up

at the barriers, and the City gives itself a gradual shake. All the gates begin to yawn, turning on their hinges like the membranes of some gigantic lobster invisibly controlled by some thirty thousand men and women. Each one of these thirty thousand must live in the allotted six square feet of space which serves as kitchen, workshop, nursery, bedroom, and garden; each one is bound to see everything, while there is scarce light enough to see anything. Imperceptibly the monster's joints creak, the stir of life spreads, the street finds a tongue, and by noon it is alive everywhere, the chimneys smoke, the monster feeds, and with a roar It stretches out its myriad paws. 'Tis a wonderful sight! And yet, oh Paris! who has not marveled at thy dark passages, thy fitful gleams of light, thy deep, soundless blind alleys? They who have not heard thy murmurs between midnight and two o'clock in the morning, know nothing as yet of thy real poetry, of thy bizarre, broad contrasts.

There are a very few amateurs, amateurs are they that can keep a steady head and take their Paris with gusto; and these know the physiognomy of the city so well, that they know "even her spots, her blemishes, and her warts." Others may think of Paris as the monstrous marvel, as an astounding assemblage of brains and machinery in motion, as the City of a Hundred Thousand Romances, the head of the world. But for these who know her, Paris wears a dull or a gay face, she is ugly or fair, alive or dead; for them she is a living creature. Every room in a house is a lobe of the cellular tissue of the great courtesan, whose heart, and brain, and fantastic life they know to the uttermost. Therefore they are her lovers. They look up at a street corner, knowing that they shall see a clock-face; they tell a friend with an empty snuff-box to "take such and such a turning, and you will find a tobacconist's shop to the left, next door to a pastry-cook that has a pretty wife."

For poets of this order, a walk through Paris is an expensive luxury. How refuse to spend a few minutes in watching the dramas, the accidents, the faces, the picturesque chance

effects which importune you in the streets of the restless Queen of Cities that goes clad in placards, yet can boast not one clean corner, so complacent is she to the vices of the French nation? Who has not left home in the morning for the uttermost ends of Paris, and recognized by dinner-time the futility of his efforts to get away from the centre? Such as these will pardon these vagrant beginnings, which, after all, may be summed up by one eminently profitable and novel observation (so far as any observation can be novel in Paris where there is nothing new, not even the statue set up yesterday, on which the street urchin has left his mark already).

Well, then—there are certain streets, unknown for the most part by fashionable people, there are certain districts and certain houses to which a woman of fashion cannot go, unless she wishes that the most cruelly injurious constructions shall be put upon her errand. If she is a wealthy woman with a carriage of her own, and if she chooses to go on foot, or disguised, through one of these slums, her reputation as an

who can flatter himself that he will ever be understood? We all die unappreciated. It is the lot of women and of men of letters.

At half-past eight one February evening, thirteen years ago, a young man chanced to turn the corner of the Rue de Pagevin into the Rue des Vieux-Augustins precisely at the point where the Rue Soly enters it. Now, at that time there was not a wall in the Rue Pagevin but echoed a foul word; the Rue Soly was one of the narrowest and least practicable thoroughfares in Paris, not excepting the most frequented nooks in the most deserted streets of the city; and the young man came there by one of those chances that do not come twice in a lifetime. Arrived at this point, he was walking carelessly along when he saw a woman a few paces ahead of him, and fancied that he saw in her a vague resemblance to one of the prettiest women in Paris, a beautiful and modest woman whom he secretly and passionately loved; loved, too, without hope. She was married. In a moment his heart gave a bound. An intolerable heat, kindled in his diaphragm, spread through every vein. He felt a cold chill along his spine, a tingling sensation on the surface of his face.

He was young, he was in love, he knew Paris. His perspicacity would not allow him to shut his eyes to all the vile possibilities of the situation—a young, fair, and wealthy woman of fashion stealing along the street with a guilty, furtive step! That She should be in that filthy neighborhood at that hour of night!

His love seems romantic, no doubt, and the more so because he was an officer in the Guards. Of a man in an infantry regiment the thing is not inconceivable; but as a cavalry officer high in the service, he belonged to a division of the army that most desires rapid conquests. The cavalry are vain of their uniform, but they are vainer still of their success with women. Nevertheless, the officer's love was a genuine passion that will seem great to many a young heart. He loved the woman because she was virtuous. Her virtues, her

reserved grace, the saintliness that awed him,—these were the most precious treasures of his hidden passion. And she, in truth, was worthy of a Platonic love such as you sometimes find like a rare flower on the chronicler's page among the ruin and bloodshed of the Middle Ages. She was worthy to be the secret spring of all a young man's actions; the source of a love as high and pure as the blue heavens, a love without hope, to which a man clings because it never disappoints him, a love prodigal of uncontrolled delight, especially at an age when hearts are hot and imaginations poignant, and a man's eyes see very clearly.

There are strange, grotesque, inconceivable night effects to be seen in Paris; you cannot think, unless you have amused yourself with watching these, how fantastic a woman's shape can grow in the dusk. Some times the creature whom you follow by accident or design seems graceful and slender; sometimes a glimpse of a stocking, if it is very white, leads you to think that the outlines beneath are dainty and fine; a

as the same shawl and velvet bonnet that she wore morning. Not a speck on her gray stockings; not a f mud on her shoes. The shawl clung tightly about lines of her bust, vaguely moulding its exquisite con- but the young man had seen those white shoulders in lroom, and he knew what a wealth of beauty was hid- neath the shawl.

ntelligent observer can guess by the way in which a nne wraps her shawl about her shoulders, by her man- lifting her foot, on what mysterious errand she is There is an indescribable tremor and lightness about l her movements; she seems to weigh less, she walks on, or rather she threads her way like a spinning star, , borne along by a thought, which the folds of her he flutter of her skirts, betray.

young man quickened his pace, passed, and turned his look at her—— Presto! She had disappeared down y, a wicket with a bell attached slammed and tinkled er. He turned back and caught sight of her as she l the staircase at the end of the passage, not without ous greetings on the part of an old portress below. a crooked staircase, the lamplight fell full on the steps, up which the lady sprang lightly and briskly, npatient woman might do.

y impatient?" he asked himself, as he went back to imself against the opposite wall. He gazed up, luck- ght, watching every story as narrowly as if he were a re on the track of a conspirator.

as a house like thousands of others in Paris, mean, nplace, narrow, dingy, with three windows on each of r floors. The shop and the entresol belonged to the ker. The first-floor shutters were closed. Whither lady gone? He fancied that he heard the jingling of bell on the second floor. And, in fact, a light began in a room above, with two brightly illuminated win- nd presently appeared in a third window, hitherto in s, which seemed to belong to the parlor or dining-

room. In a moment the vague shadow of a woman's bo
appeared on the ceiling, the door was closed, the first r
relegated to darkness, and the two further windows sh
red as before. Just then a voice cried, *"Look out!"* and so
thing struck against the young man's shoulder.

"You don't seem to mind in the least what you are abo
said the gruff voice. It was a workman, carrying a long pl
on his shoulder. He went by. The man might have been
as a warning by Providence to ask the prying inquirer, "W
are you meddling for? Mind your own business, and le
Parisiennes to their own little affairs."

The officer folded his arms; and being out of sight of e
one, he allowed two angry tears to roll down his cheeks.
sight of these shadows moving across the windows was pai
to him; he looked away up the Rue des Vieux-Augustins,
saw a hackney cab drawn up under a blind wall, at a dista
from any house door or shop window.

Is it she? Or is it not? Life or death for a lover. And
lover waited in suspense for an age of twenty minutes. T

the feathers lend something vague and Ossianic, and a great distinction to a face."

"Well, send them to me at once."

With that the lady tripped away round the corner into the Rue de Ménars and entered her own house. The door closed upon her, and the young lover, his hopes lost, and double misfortune, his cherished beliefs lost too, went through Paris like a drunken man, till before long he found himself at his own door, with no very clear knowledge how he came there. He flung himself into an easy-chair, rested his feet on the fire-dogs, and sat, with his head in his hands, while his soaked boots first dried and then scorched on the bars. It was a dreadful hour for him; he had come to one of those crises in a man's life when character is modified; and the course of action of the best of men depends upon the first lucky or unlucky step that he chances to take; upon Providence or Fate, whichever you choose.

He came of a good family, not that their nobility was of very ancient date; but there are so few old houses left in these days, that any young man comes of an old family. One of his ancestors had purchased the post of Councillor to the Parliament of Paris, and in course of time became President. His sons, with a fine fortune apiece, had entered the King's service, made good marriages, and arrived at Court. Then came the Revolution and swept them all away. One of them, however, an old and stubborn dowager, who had no mind to emigrate, remained in Paris, was put in prison, and lay there in danger of her life till the 9th Thermidor saved her, and finally she recovered her property. Afterwards, at an auspicious moment in 1804, she sent for her grandson Auguste de Maulincour, sole surviving scion of the Carbonnons de Maulincourt, and in the characters of mother, noble, and self-willed dowager brought him up with treble care.

At a later day, after the Restoration, Auguste de Maulincour, aged eighteen, entered the *Maison rouge*, followed the Princes to Ghent, received a commission in the Guards, and at three-and-twenty was a major in a cavalry regiment—a su-

perb position which he owed to his grandmother. And indeed, in spite of her age, the old lady knew her way at Court remarkably well.

This twofold biography, with some variations, is substantially the history of every family of émigrés, when blessed with debts and possessions, dowagers and tact.

Mme. la Baronne de Maulincourt had a friend, the elderly Vidame de Pamiers, a sometime Commander of the Order of Malta. It was an eternal friendship of the kind that grows out of other ties formed sixty years ago, a friendship which nothing can destroy, because down in the depths of it lie secrets of the hearts of man and woman. These, if one had the time, would be well worth guessing; but such secrets, condensed into a score of lines, lose their savor; they should furnish forth instead some four volumes that might prove as interesting as *Le Doyen de Killerine*—a work which young men are wont to discuss and criticise and leave unread.

Auguste de Maulincour was connected, therefore, with the

t clairvoyant, bound to respect the will of the King, know-
g the while that the Crown was entering on a mistaken pol-
y. The older men counted the younger as naught, and jeal-
sly kept the reins of government in their enfeebled hands
t a time when the Monarchy might have been saved by their
ithdrawal and the accession of that young France at whom
e old-fashioned doctrinaires and émigrés of the Restora-
on are still pleased to laugh.

Auguste de Maulincour was one victim of the ideas that
eighed upon the youth of those days. It was in this wise.
he Vidame de Pamiers, even at the age of sixty-seven, was
till a very lively personage, who had both seen and lived a
reat deal. He told a story well, he was a man of honor and
allantry, but so far as women were concerned he held the
ost detestable opinions. He fell in love, but he did not
espect women. Women's honor, women's sentiments? Fid-
le-de-dee! folly and make-believe. In the company of women
e believed in them, did this *ci-devant* "monster"; he
rought out their merits, he never contradicted a lady. But
mong friends, when women were in question, the Vidame
aid it down as an axiom that the whole duty of a young man
as to deceive women and to carry on several intrigues at
nce; and that when a young man attempted to meddle with
fairs of State, he made a gross mistake.

It is vexatious to be obliged to sketch such a hackneyed
haracter. Where has he not appeared? Is he not literally
almost as worn out as the Imperial Grenadier? But over M.
e Maulincour the Vidame exercised an influence which must
e recorded; he was a moralist after his own fashion, and he
sed to try to convert the young man to the doctrines of the
reat age of gallantry.

As for the dowager, she was a tender, pious woman, placed
etween her Vidame and God; a pattern of grace and sweet-
ess, but none the less endowed with a persistence which
ever went beyond the bounds of good taste, and always tri-
mphed in the end. She had tried to preserve her grandson
n all the fair illusions of life; she had brought him up on

the best principles; she had given him all her own del
of feeling, and had made a diffident man of him, and t
appearance an absolute fool. His boy's sensibility, untou
by contact with the world, had met with no rubs withou
modest, so keenly sensitive was it, that actions and ma
to which the world attaches no importance grieved him s
He felt ashamed of his sensitiveness, hid it beneath a
of assurance, and suffered in silence, laughing in com
at things which he alone in his secret heart admired.
therefore he was mistaken in his choice; for by a co
freak of Fate he, the man of mild melancholy, who saw
in its spiritual aspects, must needs fall in love with a w
who detested German *sensiblerie*. He began to distrust
self. He grew moody, hugged himself on his troubles,
made moan because he was not understood. And then—
we always desire a thing more vehemently because it is
to win—he continued to worship women with the inge
tenderness and feline delicacy of which they possess the se

king some one who should understand him (that quest, way, is the lover's folly of our time), Auguste found ct woman—a woman with that indescribable touch of ess and holiness which inspires such reverence that eds all the support of a long intimacy to declare itself. nd her in a circle as far as possible from his own, in ond sphere of that financial world in which great sts take the first place.

ı Auguste gave himself up wholly to the bliss of the oving and profound of passions; a purely contempla- e—a love made up of uncounted repressed longings, ks of passion so vague, so deep, so fugitive, so vivid, is hard to find a comparison for them; they are like ents, or sunlight, or cloud shadows, like all things that orth for a moment in the outer world to vanish, re- d die, and leave a long wake of emotion in the heart. ı man is young enough to conceive melancholy and far- s, to see in woman something more than a woman, can ater happiness befall him than this—of loving so well e mere contact of a white glove, the light touch of a 's hair, the sound of a voice, the chance of one look, n with a joy outpassing a fortunate lover's ecstasy of on? And for this reason, none but slighted, shy, un- ve, unhappy men and women, unknown lovers, know : there is in the sound of the voice of the one whom ve. It is because those fire-laden vibrations of the e their source and origin in the soul itself that they hearts into communication with such violence, such bought transference. So little misleading are they, ingle modulation is often a revelation in itself. What ment is poured forth upon a poet's heart by the mu- sonance of a low voice! What freshness it spreads ı his soul, what visions it summons up! Love is in the fore the eyes make confession.

ste, a poet after the manner of lovers—for there are ho feel and poets who express, and the former are the —Auguste had known the sweetness of all these early

joys, so far-reaching, so abundant. *She* was the possessor of such an entrancing voice as the most guileful of women might covet, that she might deceive others at her pleasure; hers were those silver notes, low only to the ear, that peal aloud through the heart, soothing the tumult and unrest that they stir.

And this was the woman who had gone at night to the Rue Soly in the neighborhood of the Rue Pagevin! He had seen her stealing into a house of ill-fame; and that most magnificent of passions had been brought low. The Vidame's reasoning triumphed.

"If she is false to her husband, we will both avenge ourselves," said Auguste. And there was still love left in that *if*. The suspended judgment of Cartesian philosophy is a homage always due to virtue. The clocks struck ten; and Auguste de Maulincour bethought himself that the woman he loved must surely be going to a dance at a house that he knew. He dressed, went thither, and made a furtive survey

ed at heart by it; and many of the scoffers, when at
and alone with themselves, curse the world, and despise
woman. This was how Auguste de Maulincour felt
onfronted Mme. Jules. It was a strange position. He
is woman exchanged a few words seven or eight times
ason—that was all; yet he was charging her with stolen
re of which she knew nothing, and pronouncing judg-
rithout telling her of the accusation.

y a young man has done the same and gone home bro-
arted because all is over between him and some woman
he once worshiped in his heart, and now scorns in his
soul. Then follow soliloquies heard of none, spoken
walls of some lonely refuge; storms raised and quieted
heart's depths, wonderful scenes of man's inner life
still await their painter.

Jules Desmarets made the round of the rooms, while his
ook a seat. But she seemed embarrassed in some way;
she chatted with her neighbor, she stole a glance now
gain at her husband. M. Jules Desmarets was the
de Nucingen's stockbroker. And now for the history
husband and wife.

Desmarets, five years before his marriage, was a clerk
ockbroker's office; he had nothing in the world but his
r salary. But he was one of those men whom misfor-
eaches to know life in a very few lessons, men who
out their line and keep to it persistently as an insect;
ther obstinate creatures he could sham death if any-
stopped him, and weary out the patience of opponents
patience of the woodlouse. Young as he was, he pos-
all the republican virtues of the poor; he was sober,
er wasted his time, he set his face against pleasure.
s waiting. Nature, besides, had given him the immense
age of a prepossessing exterior. His calm, pure fore-
the outlines of his placid yet expressive features, the
nty of his manners, and everything about him, told of a
orking, uncomplaining existence, of the high personal
which inspires awe in others, and of that quiet noble-

ness of spirit which is equal to all situations. His modesty impressed those who knew him with a certain respect.

It was a solitary life, however, that he led in the midst of Paris. Society he saw only by glimpses during the few minutes spent on holidays in his employer's drawing-room. And in him, as in most men who lead such a life, there were astonishing depths of passion, inward forces too great to be brought into play by small occasions. His narrow means compelled him to live like an ascetic, and he subdued his fancies with hard work. After growing pale over figures, he sought relaxation in a dogged effort to acquire the wider knowledge so necessary to any man that would make his mark in these days, whether in business, at the bar, in politics or letters. The one reef in the careers of these finer natures is their very honesty. They come across some penniless girl, fall in love, and marry her, and afterwards wear out their lives in the struggle for existence, with want on the one hand, love on the other

gather the sweet fruits of the love that seems to them like a power dropped down from heaven.

A smile from his wife, a mere modulation of her voice, was enough to give Jules Desmarets a conception of the infinite of love. Happily the concentrated fire of passion within revealed itself artlessly to the woman for whom it burned. And these two human creatures loved each other devoutly. To sum up all in a few words, they took each other by the hand without a blush, and went through the world together as two children, brother and sister, might pass through a crowd that makes way admiringly for them.

The young lady was in the odious position in which selfishness places some children at their birth. She had no recognized status; her name, Clémence, and her age were attested, not by a certificate of birth, but by a declaration made before a notary. As to her fortune, it was trifling. Jules Desmarets, bearing these bad tidings, was the happiest of men. If Clémence had belonged to some wealthy family, he would have despaired; but she was a poor love-child, the offspring of a dark, illicit passion. They were married. This was the beginning of a series of pieces of good fortune for Jules. Everybody envied him his luck; jealous tongues alleged that he succeeded by sheer good fortune, and left his merits and ability out of account.

Clémence's mother, nominally her godmother, bade Jules purchase a stockbroker's connection a few days after the wedding, promising to secure all the necessary capital. Such situations were still to be bought at moderate prices. On the great lady's recommendation, a wealthy capitalist made advances on the most favorable terms to Jules Desmarets; and, lodging in the stockbroker's own drawing-room, lent him money enough to exploit his business, and by the next day the former clerk had bought his employer's connection.

At four years Jules Desmarets was one of the wealthiest brokers of his fraternity. Important clients had been added to the number of those left him by his predecessor. He inspired unbounded confidence; and from the manner in which

business came to him, it was impossible but that he shoul recognize some occult influence due to his wife's mother, or, a he believed, to the mysterious protection of Providence.

Three years after the marriage Clémence lost her goo mother. By that time M. Jules, so called to distinguish hi from his elder brother, whom he had established in Paris a a notary, was in receipt of an income of two hundred thou sand livres. There was not such another happy couple i Paris. A five years' course of such unwonted love had bee troubled but once by a slander, for which M. Jules took signal vengeance. One of his old associates said that M. Jul owed his success to his wife, and that influence in high plac had been dearly bought. The inventor of the slander wa killed in the duel. A passionate love so deeply rooted that i stood the test of marriage was much admired in societ though some women were displeased by it. It was prett to see them together; they were respected, and made muc of on all sides. M. and Mme. Jules were really popular, per

pocket-money, but this could not possibly be enough, they said, for her expenses. And, indeed, she was often more daintily dressed in her own home than in other people's houses. She only cared to adorn herself for her husband's eyes, trying in this way to prove to him that for her he was all the world. This was love indeed, pure love, and more than this, it was happy as clandestine love sanctioned by the world can be. M. Jules was still his wife's lover, and more in love every day. Everything in his wife, even her caprices, made him happy. When she had no new fancy to gratify, he felt as much disturbed as if this had been a symptom of bad health.

It was against this passion that Auguste de Maulincour, for his misfortune, had dashed himself. He loved Clémence Desmarets to distraction. And yet even with a supreme passion in his heart he was not ridiculous, and he lived the regular garrison life, yet even with a glass of champagne in his hand he wore an abstracted air. His was the quiet scorn of existence, the clouded countenance worn alike on various pretexts by jaded spirits, by men but little satisfied with the hollowness of their lives, and by the victims of pulmonary disease or heart troubles. A hopeless love or a distaste for existence constitutes a sort of social position nowadays.

To take a queen's heart by storm were perhaps a more hopeful enterprise than a madly-conceived passion for a woman happily married. Auguste de Maulincour had sufficient excuse for his gravity and dejection. A queen has always the vanity of her power; her height above her lover places her at a disadvantage; but a well-principled bourgeoise, like a hedgehog or an oyster, is encompassed about with awkward defences.

At this particular moment Auguste stood near his undeclared lady. She, certainly, was incapable of carrying on a double intrigue. There sat Mme. Jules in childlike composure, the least guileful of women, gentle, full of queenly serenity. What depths can there be in human nature? The Baron, before addressing her, kept his eyes on husband and

wife in turn. What reflections did he not make! In a minute's space he recomposed a second version of Young's *Night Thoughts*. And yet—the rooms were filled with dance music, and the light of hundreds of wax tapers streamed down upon them. It was a banker's ball, one of those insolent fêtes by which the world of dull gold attempted to rival that other world of gilded rank and ormolu, the world where the high-born Faubourg Saint-Germain was laughing yet, all unconscious that a day was approaching when capitalists would invade the Luxembourg and seat a king on the throne. Conspiracy used to dance in those days, giving as little thought to future bankruptcies of Power as to failures ahead in the financial world. M. le Baron de Nucingen's gilded salons wore that look of animation which a fête in Paris is wont to wear; there is gaiety, at any rate, on the surface. The wit of the cleverer men infects the fools, while the beaming expression characteristic of the latter spreads over the countenances of their superiors in intellect; and the whole room

n to me, monsieur. If I told you my real reason for
cing, it would seem ridiculous to you. There is no
ity, I think, in declining to give private reasons at
eople usually laugh."
confidence, madame, implies a degree of friendship
I, no doubt, am unworthy. But it is impossible that
ld have any but noble secrets, and can you think me
of irreverent jesting?"
" she said. "You, like the rest of men, laugh at our
eelings and misconstrue them. Besides, I have no
I have a right to love my husband before all the
I am proud of it, I tell you; and if you laugh at me
say that I never dance with any one else, I shall have
t opinion of your heart."
you never danced with any one but your husband
ur marriage?"
monsieur. I have leaned on no other arm, no one
come very close to me."
not your doctor so much as felt your pulse?"
well, now you are laughing."
madame, I admire you because I can understand.—
suffer others to hear your voice, to see you, to . . .
, you permit our eyes to rest admiringly on you——"
these things trouble me," she broke in. "If it were
for husband and wife to live like lover and mistress,
have it so; for in that case——"
hat case, how came you to be out, on foot and dis-
a few hours ago, in the Rue Soly?"
t is the Rue Soly?" asked she, not a trace of emotion
ear voice, not the faintest quiver in her features. She
redden, she was quite composed.
t! You did not go up the stairs to the second floor
se at the corner of the Rue des Vieux-Augustins and
Soly? You had not a cab waiting for you ten paces
nd you did not return to a shop in the Rue de Riche-
ere you chose the marabouts in your hair at this mo-

house this evening." She told the lie
laughing face; she fanned herself as
who could have laid a hand on her
perhaps have felt that it was damp.
self of the Vidame's teaching.
one extraordinarily like you," he re-
belief.
"If you are capable of following a woman
secrets, you will permit me to tell you
wrong, very wrong, and I do you the
believe it of you."
away, took up his position before the
thoughtful. He bent his head, but his
bily upon Mme. Jules. She had for-
on the walls, and glanced towards him
with an evident dread in her eyes. Then
her husband, laid a hand upon his arm, and
the rooms. As she passed M. de Maulin-

success, imagination opened out for him the vast field of the transports of possession. In short, if he had lost an angel, he had found the most tantalizing of devils. He lay down to build castles in the air, and to justify Mme. Jules. Some errand of charity had brought her there, he told himself, but he did not believe it. He made up his mind to devote himself entirely to the investigation of the causes and motives involved in this mysteriously hidden knot. It was a romance to read; or rather it was a play to act, and he was cast for a part in it.

It is a very fine thing to play the detective for one's own ends and for passion's sake. Is it not an honest man's chance of enjoying the amusements of the thief? Still, you must be prepared to boil with helpless rage, to growl with impatience, to stand in mud till your feet are frozen, to shiver and burn and choke down false hopes. You must follow up any indication to an end unknown; and miss your chance, storm, improvise lamentations and dithyrambs for your own benefit, and utter insensate exclamations before some harmless passer-by, who stares back at you in amazement. You take to your heels and overturn good souls with their apple-baskets, you wait and hang about under a window, you make guesses by the running hundred. Still it is sport, and Parisian sport; sport with all its accessories save dogs, and guns, and tally-ho. Nothing, except some moments in the gambler's life, can compare with it. A man's heart must needs be swelling with love and revenge before he will lie in ambush ready to spring like a tiger on his prey; before he can find enjoyment in watching all that goes on in the quarter; for interest of many kinds abounds in Paris without the added pleasure of stalking game. How should one soul suffice a man for all this? What is it but a life made up of a thousand passions, a thousand feelings, and thoughts?

Auguste de Maulincour flung himself heart and soul into this feverish life, because he felt all its troubles and joys. He went about Paris in disguise; he watched every corner of the Rue Pagevin and the Rue des Vieux-Augustins. He ran like a lamplighter from the Rue de Ménars to the Rue

pes. There are, in fact, a thousand nothings to won-
and the idlers are studying them with keen relish
the owner of the premises treats them to occasional
from the broom-handle.
is the chatty person who grumbles and talks with the
wife, while she rests on her broom as a grenadier leans
un; there is the poverty-stricken individual glued fan-
y to the wall—he has nothing to dread from such con-
r his rags, they are already so well acquainted with
et; there is the man of education who studies, spells
even reads the advertisements, and never gets to the
them; there is the humorous person who laughs at
draggled women, and makes eyes at the people in the
s opposite; there is the mute refugee that scans every
t on every floor, and the working man or woman with
t or a bundle, as the case may be, translating the
into probable losses or gains. Then there is the ami-
n, who bounces in like a bombshell with an "Oh! what
, gentlemen!" and raises his hat to the company; and,
there is your true Parisian bourgeois, a weatherwise
who never comes out without his umbrella; he knew
and that it was going to rain, but he came out in spite
wife's advice, and now he is sitting in the porter's

member of this chance assembled group watches the
is own characteristic fashion, and then skips away for
splashing his boots, or goes because he is in a hurry
s other citizens walking past in spite of wind and
, or because the courtyard is damp and fit to give you
ath of cold—the selvedge, as the saying goes, being
an the cloth. Every one has his own reasons for go-
il no one is left but the prudent pedestrian, who waits
few blue chinks among the clouds before he goes on

Maulincour, therefore, took refuge with a tribe of
engers under the porch of an old-fashioned house
ourtyard not unlike a gigantic chimney shaft. There

were so many stories rising to a height on all sides, and the four plastered walls, covered with greenish stains and saltpetre ooze, were traversed by such a multitude of gutters and spouts, that they would have put you in mind of the cascades of St. Cloud. From every direction came the sound of falling water; it foamed, splashed, and gurgled; it gushed forth in streams, or black, or white, or blue, or green; it hissed and gathered volume under the broom wielded by the porter's wife, a toothless crone of great experience in storms, who seemed to bless the waters as she swept down a host of odds and ends into the street. A curious inventory of the rubbish would have told you a good deal about the lives and habits of the lodgers on every floor. There were tea-leaves, cuttings of chintz, discolored and spoiled petals of artificial flowers, vegetable refuse, paper and scraps of metal. Every stroke of the old woman's broom laid bare the heart of the gutter, that black channel paved with chessboard squares, on which every porter wages desperate war. The luckless lover gazed intently

eir jollity, debauchery has set its unmistakable mark
n, they hurl their silence at you like a reproach, their
expresses appalling thoughts. They are ruthless, are
wellers between beggary and crime; they circle at a
tance round the gallows, steering clear of the law in
ist of vice, and vicious within the bounds of law.
hey often provoke a smile, they set you thinking.

for instance, represents stunted civilization; he com-
s it all, thieves' honor, patriotism, and manhood, with
rerse ingenuity of the common criminal and the subtle-
d-gloved rascality. Another is resigned to his lot; he
master in mimicry, but a dull creature. None of them
mpt from passing fancies for work and thrift; but the
achinery thrusts them down into their filth, without
to discover whether there may not be poets, or great
brave men, or a whole wonderful organization among
gars in the streets, those gypsies of Paris. Like all
of men who have suffered, the beggar tribes are su-
good and superlatively wicked; they are accustomed
re nameless ills, and a fatal power keeps them on a
ith the mud of the streets. And every one of them
ream, a hope, a happiness of his own, which takes the
f gambling, or the lottery, or drink.

was nothing of this strange life about the man who
pping himself, very much at his ease, against the wall
M. de Maulincour; he looked like a fancy portrait
d by an ingenious artist on the back of some canvas
d to the studio.

as lank and lean; his leaden-hued visage revealed
depths of thought; his ironical bearing, and a dark
ich plainly conveyed his claim to treat every man as
l, dried up any feeling of compassion in the hearts of
ous. His complexion was a dingy white; his wrinkled,
head bore a vague resemblance to a block of granite.
rizzled, lank locks on either side of his face straggled
collar of a filthy greatcoat buttoned up to the chin.
as something of a Voltaire about him, something too

of a Don Quixote; melancholy, scornful, sarcastic, full of philosophical ideas, but half insane. Apparently he wore no shirt. His beard was long. His shabby black cravat was so slit and worn, that it left his neck on exhibition, and a protuberant, deeply furrowed throat, on which the black veins stood out like cords. There were wide, dark bruised circles about his eyes. He must have been at least sixty years old. His hands were white and clean. His shoes were full of holes, and trodden down at the heels. A pair of much mended blue trousers, covered with a kind of pale fluff, added to the squalor of his appearance.

Perhaps the man's wet clothes exhaled a nauseous smell; perhaps at any time he had about him that odor of poverty peculiar to Paris slums—for slums, like offices, vestries, and hospitals, have a special smell, and a stale, fetid, unimaginable reek it is. At any rate, the man's neighbors edged away and left him alone. He glanced round at them, and then at the officer; it was an unmoved, expressionless look, the look

A MOSIEUR.

MOSIEUR FERRAGUSSE,

Rue des Grands-Augustins, au coing de la
Rue Soly.

PARIS.

There was no stamp on the letter, and at sight of the direction M. de Maulincour hesitated to return it; for there are few passions which will not turn base in the long length. Some presentiment of the opportuneness of the treasure trove crossed the Baron's mind. He would keep the letter, and so acquire a right to enter the mysterious house, never doubting but that the man lived therein. Even now a suspicion, vague as the beginnings of daylight, connected the stranger with Mme. Jules. Jealous lovers will suppose anything; and it is by this very process of supposing everything and selecting the more probable conjectures that examining magistrates, spies, lovers, and observers get at the truth which they have an interest in discovering.

"Does the letter belong to him? Is it from Mme. Jules?"

His uneasy imagination flung a host of questions to him at once, but at the first words of the letter he smiled. Here it follows words for word in the glory of its artless phrases; it was impossible to add anything to it, and short of omitting the letter itself, nothing could be taken away. It has been necessary, however, to revise the orthography and the punctuation; for in the original there are neither commas nor stops, nor so much as a note of exclamation, a fact that strikes at the root of the system by which modern authors endeavor to render the effect of the great disasters of every kind of passion:—

"HENRY" (so it ran), "of all the things that I have had to give up for your sake, this is the hardest, that I mayn't give you news of myself. There is a voice that I must obey, which tells me I ought to let you know all the wrong you've done me. I know beforehand that you are that hardened by vice

that you will not stoop to pity me. Your heart must be deaf to all feeling; is it not deaf to the cry of nature? Not that it matters much. I am bound to let you know the degree to which you are to blame, and the horror of the position in which you have put me. You knew how I suffered for my first fall, Henry, yet you could bring me to the same pass again, and leave me in my pain and despair. Yes, I own I used to think you loved and respected me, and that helped me to bear up. And now what is left to me? I have lost all that I cared most about, all that I lived for, friends, and relations, and character, and all through you. I have given up everything for you, and now I have nothing before me but shame and disgrace and, I don't blush to say it, want. It only needed your scorn and hatred to make my misery complete; and now I have that as well, I shall have courage to carry out my plans. I have made up my mind—it's for the credit of my family—I shall put an end to my troubles. You must not think hardly of the thing that I am going to do,

long I shall have to stop with Mme. Meynardie, but be generous enough to keep out of my sight there. Your last two visits hurt me so that it was a long time before I got over it; but I don't mean to go into any particulars of your behavior in that respect. You hate me; the words are written on my heart, and freeze it with cold. Alas! just when I want all my courage, my wits desert me. Henry dear, before I put this bar between us, let me know for the last time that you respect me still; write to me, send me an answer, say that you respect me if you don't love me any more. I shall always be able to look you in the face, but I don't ask for a sight of you; I am so weak, and I love you so, that I don't know what I might do. But, for pity's sake, write me a line at once; it will give me courage to bear my misery. Farewell, you have brought all my troubles upon me, but you are the one friend that my heart chose, and will never forget. IDA."

This girl's life, her disappointed love, her ill-starred joys, her grief, her dreadful resignation to her lot, the story summed up in so few words, produced a moment's effect upon M. de Maulincour. He asked himself, as he read the obscure but essentially Parisian tragedy written upon the soiled sheet, whether this Ida might not be connected in some way with Mme. Jules; whether the assignation that he chanced to witness that evening was not some charitable effort on her part. Could that aged, poverty-stricken man be Ida's betrayer? . . . The thing bordered on the marvelous. Amusing himself in a maze of involved and incompatible ideas, the Baron reached the neighborhood of the Rue Pagevin just in time to see a cab stop at the end of the Rue des Vieux-Augustins nearest the Rue Montmartre. Every cabman on the stand had something to say to the new arrival.

"Can *she* be in it?" he thought.

His heart beat with hot, feverish throbs. He pushed open the wicket with the tinkling bell, but he lowered his head as he entered; he felt ashamed of himself, a voice in his inmost soul cried, "Why meddle in this mystery?"

drill and smokes cigars, but the fit does not last; martial exercises are suddenly abandoned, and the cigar is thrown away. Then Paris begins to feel low, becomes insolvent, sells its effects in the Place du Châtelet, and files its petition; but in a few days all is straight again, and the city puts on festival array and dances. One day the city fills hands and mouth with barley sugar, yesterday it bought *Papier Weynen;* to-day the monster has the toothache, and plasters every wall with advertisements of *Alexipharmaques,* and to-morrow it will lay in a store of cough lozenges. Paris has the craze of the season or of the month as well as the rage of the day; and at this particular time everybody was building or pulling down something. What they built or pulled down no one knows to this day, but there was scarce a street in which you did not see erections of scaffolding, poles, planks, and cross bars lashed together at every story. The fragile structures, covered with white plaster dust, quivered under the tread of the Limousin bricklayers and shook with the vibrations of

M. de Maulincour, sure that he had touched nothing, brought an action for damages. The law stepped in. It turned out upon inquiry that a boy with a wooden lath had mounted guard to warn passengers to give the building a wide berth, and with that the affair came to an end. M. de Maulincour must even put up with the loss of his manservant and the fright that he had had. He kept his bed for several days, for he had been bruised by the breakage of the cab, and he was feverish after the shock to his nerves. So there was no visit paid to Mme. Jules.

Ten days later, when he went out of doors for the first time, he drove to the Bois de Boulogne in the now repaired cab. He turned down the Rue de Bourgogne, and had reached the river just opposite the Chamber of Deputies, when the axle snapped in the middle. The Baron was driving so fast that the two wheels swerved and met with a shock that must have fractured his skull if it had not been for the hood of the vehicle, and, as it was, he sustained serious injury to the ribs. So for the second time in ten days he was brought home more dead than alive to the weeping dowager.

This second accident aroused his suspicions. He thought, vaguely, however, of Mme. Jules and Ferragus; and by way of clearing up his suspicions, he had the broken axle brought into his bedroom, and sent for his coachbuilder. The man inspected the fracture, and proved two things to M. Maulincour's mind. First, that the axle never came from his establishment, for he made a practice of cutting his initials roughly on every one that he supplied. How this axle had been exchanged for the previous one he was at a loss to explain. And secondly, he found that there was a very ingeniously contrived flaw in the iron bar, a kind of cavity made by a blowpipe while the metal was hot.

"Eh! M. le Baron, a man had need to be pretty clever to turn out an axle-bar on that pattern; you could swear it was natural——"

M. de Maulincour asked the man to keep his own counsel, and considered that he had had a sufficient warning. The

life. His mind was always intently examining the
s by which he might win a triumph in his mysterious
with unknown antagonists. His desire for this woman
the greater by every obstacle. Amid all his thoughts
Jules was always present in his heart of hearts; there
ood more irresistible now in her imputed sin than she
to be with all the undoubted virtues for which he once
orshiped her.

e sick man, wishing to reconnoitre the enemy's posi-
thought there could be no danger in letting the old Vi-
into the secret. The Vidame loved Auguste as a father
his wife's children; he was shrewd and adroit, he was
liplomatic turn of mind. So the Vidame came, heard
aron's story, and shook his head, and the two held coun-
Auguste maintained that in the days in which they lived,
tective force and the powers that be were equal to find-
ut any mysteries, and that if there was absolutely no
way, the police would prove powerful auxiliaries. The
ne did not share his young friend's confidence or his
tions.

he police are the biggest bunglers on earth, dear boy,
he powers that be are the feeblest of all things where
duals are concerned. Neither the authorities nor the
can get to the bottom of people's minds. If they dis-
the causes of a fact, that is all that can reasonably be
ted of them. Now the authorities and the police are
ntly unsuited to a business of this kind; the personal
st which is not satisfied till everything is found out
ntially lacking in them. No human power can prevent
derer or a poisoner from reaching a prince's heart or an
t man's stomach. It is passion that makes the complete
ive."

th that the Vidame strongly advised his young friend
aron to travel. Let him go to Italy, and from Italy to
e, and from Greece to Syria and Asia, and come back
when his mysterious enemies should be convinced of his
tance. In this way he would conclude a tacit peace

with them. Or, if he stayed, he had better keep to his house, and even to his room, since there he could secure himself against the attacks of this Ferragus, and never leave it except to crush the enemy once for all.

"A man should never touch his enemy except to smite off his head," the Vidame said gravely.

Nevertheless, the old man promised his favorite that he would bring all the astuteness with which Heaven had gifted him to bear on the case, and that, without committing any one, he would send a reconnoitring party into the enemy's camp, know all that went on there, and prepare a victory.

The Vidame had in his service a retired Figaro, as mischievous a monkey as ever took human shape. In former times the man had been diabolically clever, and a convict's physical frame could not have responded better to all demands made upon it; he was agile as a thief, and subtle as a woman, but he had fallen into the decadence of genius for want of practice. New social conditions in Paris have reformed away the old valets of comedy. This emeritus Scapin

ragus is not the real name of the enemy in pursuit of Baron. The man, the devil rather, is called Gratien Victor Jean Joseph Bourignard. The said Gratien nard used to be a builder and contractor; he was a ch man at one time; and most of all, he was one of ttiest fellows in Paris, a Lovelace that might have led son himself astray. My information goes no further. e was a common workman; the journeymen of the f Dévorants elected him as their head, with the name agus XXIII. The police should know that, if they re to know anything. The man has moved, and at is lodging in the Rue Joquelet. Mme. Jules Des- often goes to see him. Her husband pretty often sets rn in the Rue Vivienne on his way to the Bourse; or ves her husband at the Bourse, and comes back that M. le Vidame knows so much in these matters, that not expect me to tell him whether the husband rules e, or the wife rules her husband, but Mme. Jules is so that I should bet on her. All this is absolutely cer- My Bourignard often goes to gamble at number 129. gay dog, with a liking for women, saving your pres- nd has his amours like a man of condition. As for , he is frequently in luck, he makes up like an actor, make any grimace he likes; he just leads the queerest ever heard of. He has several addresses, I have no for he nearly always escapes what M. le Vidame calls nentary investigation.' If monsieur wishes, however, n can be got rid of decently, leading such a life as . It is always easy to get rid of a man with a weak- r women. Still the capitalist is talking of moving —Now, have M. le Vidame and M. le Baron any orders ?"

m pleased with you, Justin. Go no further in the vithout instructions, but keep an eye on everything that M. le Baron shall have nothing to fear." He to Maulincour. "Live as before, dear boy," he said, rget Mme. Jules."

"No, no," said Auguste, "I will not give her up to Gratien Bourignard; I mean to have him bound hand and foot and Mme. Jules as well."

That evening Auguste de Maulincour, recently promoted to a higher rank in the Guards, went to a ball in Mme. la Duchesse de Berri's apartment at the Élysée-Bourbon. There, surely, there was no fear of the slightest danger; and yet, the Baron de Maulincour came away with an affair of honor on his hands, and no hope of arranging it. His antagonist, the Marquis de Ronquerolles, had the strongest reasons for complaining of him; the quarrel arose out of an old flirtation with M. de Ronquerolles' sister, the Comtesse de Sérizy. This lady, who could not endure high-flown German sentiment, was all the more particular with regard to every detail of the prude's costume in which she appeared in public. Some fatal inexplicable prompting moved Auguste to make a harmless joke, Mme. de Sérizy took it in very bad part, and her brother took offence. Explanations took place

he is sure to require, and even in public if he wishes it; for when a lady is in the case, there is nothing, I think, dishonoring to a gentleman in such an apology. So I appeal to his common-sense and generosity, isn't there something rather senseless in fighting a duel when the better cause may happen to get the worst of it?"

But M. de Ronquerolles would not hear of such a way out of the affair. The Baron's suspicions were confirmed. He went across to his opponent.

"Well, M. le Marquis," he said, "will you pledge me your word as a noble, before these gentlemen, that you bear me no grudge save the one for which ostensibly we are to fight?"

"Monsieur, that is a question which ought not to be put to me."

M. de Maulincour returned to his place. It was agreed beforehand that only one shot should be fired on either side. The antagonists were so far apart, that a fatal end for M. de Maulincour seemed problematical, not to say impossible; but Auguste dropped. The bullet had passed through his ribs, missing the heart by two finger-breadths. Luckily, the extent of the injury was not great.

"This was no question of revenge for a dead passion; you aimed too well, monsieur, for that," said a Guardsman.

M. de Ronquerolles, thinking that he had killed his man, could not keep back a sardonic smile.

"Julius Cæsar's sister, monsieur, must be above suspicion."

"Mme. Jules again!" exclaimed Auguste, and he fainted away before he could finish the caustic sarcasm that died on his lips. He had lost a good deal of blood, but his wound was not dangerous. For a fortnight his grandmother and the Vicame nursed him with the lavish care which none but the old, wise with the experience of a lifetime, can give. Then one morning he received a rude shock. It came from his grandmother. She told him that her old age, the last days of her life, were filled with deadly anxiety. A letter addressed to her and signed "F." gave her the history of the espionage to which her grandson had stooped; it was given in full from

point to point. M. de Maulincour was accused of conduct unworthy of a man of honor. He had posted an old woman (so it was stated) near the cabstand in the Rue de Ménars. Nominally his wrinkled spy supplied water to the cabmen, but really she was stationed there to watch Mme. Jules Desmarets. He had deliberately set himself to play the detective on one of the most harmless men in the world, and tried to find out all about him when secrets which concerned the lives of three persons were involved. Of his own accord he had entered upon a pitiless struggle, in which he had been wounded three times already, and must inevitably succumb at last; for his death had been sworn; every human power would be exerted to compass it. It was too late for M. de Maulincour to escape his doom by a promise to respect the mysterious life of these three persons; for it was impossible to believe the word of a gentleman who could sink so low as to make himself an agent of police. And for what reason? To disturb, without cause, the existence of an innocent wo-

ome unknown person, an enemy daring enough to vow such engeance on an officer in the Guards, in the teeth of the law nd the police. He of the police was so much surprised, that e raised his green spectacles, blew his nose two or three imes, and offered his mull to the Vidame, who said, to save is dignity, that he never took snuff, though his countenance ras bedabbled with rappee. The head of the department ook his notes, and promised that, with the help of Vidocq nd his sleuth-hounds, the enemy of the Maulincour family hould be accounted for in a very short time; there were no ysteries, so he was pleased to say, for the Paris police.

A few days afterwards, the superintendent came to the Iôtel Maulincour to see M. le Vidame, and found the Baron erfectly recovered from his last injuries. He thanked the amily in formal style for the particulars which they had een so good as to communicate, and informed them that he man Bourignard was a convict sentenced to twenty years' enal servitude, and that in some miraculous way he made is escape from the gang on the way from Bicêtre to Toulon. The police had made fruitless efforts to catch him for the past ifteen years; they learned that he had very recklessly come ack to live in Paris; and there, though he was constantly mplicated in all sorts of shady affairs, hitherto he had eluded he most active search. To cut it short, the man, whose life resented a great many most curious details, was certain o be seized at one of his numerous addresses and given up o justice. This red-tape personage concluded his official report ith the remark that if M. de Maulincour attached sufficient mportance to the affair to care to be present at Bourignard's apture, he might repair to such and such a number in the ue Sainte-Foi at eight o'clock next morning. M. de Maulincour, however, felt that he could dispense with this method f making certain; he shared the feeling of awe which the olice inspires in Paris; he felt every confidence in the diligence of the local authorities.

Three days afterwards, as he saw nothing in the newspapers about an arrest which surely would have supplied ma-

: seen. He went into a still empty card-room, where
s awaited players, sat himself down on a sofa, and
iself up to the most contradictory thoughts of Mme.
hen some one grasped him by the arm; and, to his
azement, he beheld the beggar of the Rue Coquillière,
rragus, the man who lived in the Rue Soly, Justin's
ard, the convict that had died the day before.
a sound, not a word, sir!" said Bourignard. Au-
iew that voice, though to any other it would surely
med unrecognizable.
nan was very well dressed; he wore the insignia of
en Fleece and the star of the Legion of Honor.
he hissed out like a hyena, "you warrant all my at-
n your life by allying yourself with the police. You
, sir. There is no help for it. Are you in love with
iles? Did she once love you? What right have you
e her peace and smirch her reputation?"
ody else came up. Ferragus rose to go.
ou know this man?" asked M. de Maulincour, seiz-
agus by the collar.
'erragus slipped briskly out of his grasp, caught M.
incour by the hair, and shook him playfully several

ere absolutely nothing but a dose of lead that will
u to your senses?" he replied.
not personally acquainted with him," said de Mar-
had witnessed this scene, "but I know that this gen-
s M. de Funcal, a very rich Portuguese."
Funcal had vanished. The Baron went off in pur-
could not overtake him, but he reached the peristyle
o see a splendid equipage and the sneer on Ferragus'
ore he was whirled away out of sight.
pity's sake, tell me where M. de Funcal lives," said
, betaking himself to de Marsay, who happened to
quaintance.
not know, but somebody here no doubt can tell you."
wer to a question put to the Prefect, Auguste learned

that the Comte de Fumeal's address was at the Portuguese embassy. At that moment, while he fancied that he could still feel those ice-cold fingers in his hair, he saw Mme. Jules, in all the splendor of that beauty, fresh, graceful, unaffected, radiant with the sanctity of womanhood, which drew him to her at the first. For him this creature was infernal; Auguste felt nothing for her now but hate—hate that overflowed in murderous terrible glances. He watched for an opportunity of speaking to her alone.

"Madame," he said, "three times already your bravoes have missed me——"

"What do you mean, sir?" she answered, reddening. "I heard with much concern that several bad accidents had befallen you; but how can I have had anything to do with them?"

"Then you know that the man in the Rue Soly has hired ruffians on my track?"

"Sir!"

"Madame, henceforth I must call you to account not only

nly insolent, so charming, so graceful, so true amid falsehood, so perfectly well aware of the value of insincerity as a means of avoiding the rude shocks which put happiness in peril, that falsehood is as indispensable to them as cotton wool for their jewelry. Insincerity furnishes forth the staple of their talk, and truth is only brought out occasionally. They speak truth, as they are virtuous, from caprice or speculation. The methods vary with the individual character. Some women laugh and lie, others weep, or grow grave, or put themselves in a passion.

They begin life with a feigned indifference to the homage which gratifies them most; they often end by insincerity with themselves. Who has not admired their seeming loftiness when they are trembling the while for the mysterious treasure of love? Who has not studied the ease, the ready wit, the mental disengagement with which they confront the greatest embarrassments of life? Everything is quite natural; deceit flows out as snowflakes fall from the sky.

And yet what skill women have to discover the truth in another! How subtly they can use the hardest logic, in answer to the passionately uttered question that never fails to yield up some heart secret belonging to their interlocutor, if a man is so guileless as to begin with questioning a woman. If a man begins to question a woman, he delivers himself into her hand. Will she not find out anything that he means to hide, while she talks and says nothing? And yet there are men that have the audacity to enter upon a contest of wits with a Parisienne—a woman who can put herself out of reach of a thrust with "You are very inquisitive!"—"What does it matter to you?"—"Oh! you are jealous!"—"And how if I do not choose to answer you?" A Parisienne, in short, has a hundred and thirty-seven thousand ways of saying No, while her variations on the word YES surpass computation. Surely one of the finest diplomatic, philosophic, logographic, and moral performances which remain to be made would be a treatise on No and Yes. But who save an androgynous being could accomplish the diabolical feat? For which reason it

will never be attempted. Yet of all unpublished works, is there one better known or more constantly in use among women?

Have you ever studied the conduct, the pose, the *disinvoltura* of a lie? Look at it now. Mme. Jules was sitting in the right-hand corner of her carriage, and her husband to her left. She had contrived to repress her emotion as she left the ballroom, and by this time her face was quite composed. Her husband had said nothing to her then; he said nothing now. Jules was staring out of the window at the dark walls of the silent houses as they drove past; but suddenly, just as they turned the corner of a street, he seemed to come to some determination, he looked intently at his wife. She seemed to feel cold in spite of the fur-lined pelisse in which she was wrapped; she looked pensive, he thought, and perhaps she really was pensive. Of all subtly communicable moods, gravity and reflection are the most contagious.

"What can M. de Maulincour have said to more than

How many strange scenes take place in the elegant broughams which pass through the streets between midnight and one o'clock in the morning after a ball! The carriages alluded to, be it understood, are fitted with transparent panes of glass, and lanterns that not merely light up the brougham itself, but the whole street as well on either side; they belong to law-sanctioned love, and the law gives a man the right to sulk and fall out with his wife, and kiss and make it up again, in a brougham or anywhere else. So married couples are at liberty to quarrel without fear of being seen by passers-by. And how many secrets are revealed to foot-passengers in the dark streets, to the young bachelors who drove to the ball and, for some reason or other, are walking home afterwards! For the first time in their lives, Jules and Clémence leaned back in their corners; usually Desmarets pressed close to his wife's side.

"It is very cold," said Mme. Jules. But her husband heard nothing; he was intent on reading all the dark signs above the shops.

"Clémence," he began at last, "forgive me for this question that I am about to ask?"

He came nearer, put his arm about her waist, and drew her towards him.

"Oh, dear! here it comes!" thought poor Clémence.

"Well," she said aloud, anticipating the question, "you wish to know what M. de Maulincour was saying to me? I will tell you, Jules; but, I am afraid. Ah, God! can we have secrets from each other? A moment ago I knew that you were struggling between the consciousness that we love each other and a vague dread; but that consciousness that we love each other is unclouded, is it not? and do not your debts seem very trivial to you? Why not stay in the light that you love? Now I have told you everything, you will wish to know more; but after all, I myself do not know what is lurking under that two strange words. And then, perhaps, there would be a revelation in a death. I would far rather that we both put that unpleasant moment out of our minds. But in any

case, give me your word to wait till this extraordinary adventure is cleared up in some natural way.

"M. de Maulincour declared that those three accidents of which you heard—the block of stone that killed his servant, the carriage accident, and the duel about Mme. de Sérizy—were all brought upon him by a plot which *I* had woven against him. And he threatened to explain my reasons for wishing to murder him to you.

"Can you make anything out of all this? It was his face that disturbed me; there was madness in it; his eyes were haggard; he was so excited that he could not bring out his words. I felt sure that he was mad. That was all. Now, I should not be a woman if I did not know that, for a year past, M. de Maulincour has been, as they say, quite wild about me. He has never met me except at dances; we have never exchanged any words but ballroom small talk. Perhaps he wants to separate us, so that I may be left defenceless and alone some day. You see how it is! You are frowning al-

f carrying out thoughts and feelings to the uttermost; of uickening sensibility by fulfilling its myriad caprices; of ncompassing that inner life with a splendor that exalts it, legance that refines, and the subtle shades of expression that nhance the charm of love.

If you particularly detest picnic dinners and meals badly erved; if you feel a certain pleasure at the sight of dazzling hite damask, silver plate, exquisite porcelain, and richly arved and gilded tables lit up by translucent tapers; if you ave a taste for miracles of the most refined culinary art beeath silver covers with armorial bearings;—then, if you ave a mind to be consistent, you must come down from the eights of your garret, and you must leave the grisettes in he street. Garrets and grisettes, like umbrellas and hinged logs, must be left to people who take tickets at the doors of estaurants to pay for their dinners; and you must think of ove as something rudimentary, only to be developed in all s charm by a gilded fireside, in a room made deaf to all ound from without by drawn blinds and closed shutters nd thick curtain folds, while the opal light of a Parian lamp alls over soft carpets from the Savonnerie and the silken angings on the walls. You must have mirrors to reflect ach other, to give you an infinite series of pictures of the oman in whom you would fain find many women, of her o whom Love gives so many forms. There should be long, ow sofas, and a couch like a secret which you guess before t is revealed; and soft furs spread for bare feet on the floor f the dainty chamber, and wax tapers under glass shades, nd white gauze draperies, so that you can see to read at any our of the night; and flowers without too heavy-sweet a ent, and linen fine enough to satisfy Anne of Austria.

This delicious scheme had been carried out by Mme. Jules. But that is nothing; any woman of taste might do as much; ough nevertheless, there is a certain touch of personality n the arrangement of these things, a something which stamps ne ornament or that detail with a character of its own. The fanatical cult of individuality is more prevalent than ever in

these days. Rich people in France are beginning to grow more and more exclusive in their tastes and belongings than they have been for the past thirty years. Mme. Jules knew that her programme must be carried out consistently; that everything about her must be part of a harmonious whole of luxury which made a fit setting for love.

"Fifteen hundred francs and my Sophie," or "Love in a Cottage," is the sort of talk to expect from famished creatures, and brown bread does very well at first; but if the pair are really in love, their palates grow nicer, and in the end they sigh for the riches of the kitchen. Love holds toil and want in abhorrence, and would rather die at once than live a miserable life of hand to mouth.

Most women after a ball are impatient for sleep. Their rooms are strewn with limp flowers, scentless bouquets, and ball gowns. Their little thick shoes are left under an armchair, they totter across the floor in their high-heeled slippers, take the combs out of their hair, and shake down their tresses

ctive to her husband; always smart, dainty, and dressed her best for that Other, every husband's rival, the world at slanders women or picks them to pieces.

Mme. Jules did quite otherwise. Love, like all other beings, has its own instinct of self-preservation. Inspired by ve, constantly rewarded by happiness, she never failed in e scrupulous performance of little duties in which no one m grow slack, for by such means love is kept unimpaired y time. Are not these pains, these tasks, imposed by a self-spect which becomes her passing well? What are they t sweet flatteries, a way of reverencing the beloved in one's wn person?

So Mme. Jules had closed the door of her dressing-room n her husband; there she changed her ball gown and came t dressed for the night, mysteriously adorned for the mysrious festival of her heart. The chamber was always exquisite and dainty; Jules, when he entered it, found a woman oquettishly wrapped in a graceful loose gown, with her thick air twisted simply about her head. She had nothing to lear from dishevelment; she robbed Love's sight and touch f nothing. This woman was always simpler and more beauiful for him than for the world—a woman revived by her oilet, a woman whose whole art consisted in being whiter han the cambrics that she wore, fresher than the freshest cent, more irresistible than the wiliest courtesan. In a word, he was always loving, and therefore always beloved. In his admirable skill in *le métier de femme*—in the art and mystery of being a woman—lay the great secret of Joséphine's charm for Napoleon, of Cesonia's influence over Caligula in their times, of the ascendency of Diane de Poitiers over Henri II. And if this secret is so potent in the hands of women who have counted seven or eight lustres, what a weapon is it for a young wife! The prescribed happiness of fidelity becomes rapture.

Mme. Jules had been particularly careful of her toilet for the night. After that conversation which froze the blood n her veins with terror, and still caused her the liveliest

anxiety, she meant to be exquisitely charming, and she succeeded. She fastened her cambric dressing-gown, leaving it loose at the throat and let her dark hair fall loosely over her shoulders. An intoxicating fragrance clung about her after the scented bath, her bare feet were thrust into velvet slippers. Jules in his dressing-gown was standing meditatively by the fire, with his elbow on the mantel-piece, and one foot on the fender. Feeling strong on her vantage ground, she tripped across to him and laid a hand over his eyes. Then she whispered, close to his ear, so closely that he could feel her warm breath on him and the tips of her teeth, "What are you thinking about, monsieur?"

With quick tact, she held him closely to her and put her arms about him to snatch him away from his gloomy thoughts. A woman who loves knows well how to use her power; and the better the woman, the more irresistible is her coquetry.

"Of you," said he.

"Only of me?"

"Yes!"

She poured out a hundred words of the deepest tenderness. Jules, at his wife's feet, kissed her knees, her hands. The tears flowed afresh as he answered:

"Clémence, dear, I am very wretched. It is not love if you cannot trust your mistress, and you are my mistress. I worship you, Clémence, even while I doubt you. . . . The things that man said last night went to my heart; and in spite of me, they stay there to trouble me. There is some mystery underneath this. Indeed, I blush to say it, but your explanation did not satisfy me. Common sense sheds a light on it which love bids me reject. It is a dreadful struggle. How could I lie there with your head on my shoulder and think that there were thoughts in your mind that I did not know?—Oh, I believe you, I believe you," he exclaimed, as she smiled sadly and seemed about to speak. "Say not a word, reproach me with nothing. The least little word from you would break my heart. And besides, could you say a single thing that I have not said to myself for the last three hours? Yes, for three hours I lay, watching you as you slept, so beautiful you were, your forehead looked so quiet and pure. —Ah! yes, you have always told me all your thoughts, have you not? I am alone in your inmost heart. When I look into the depths of your eyes, I read all that lies there. Your life is always as pure as those clear eyes. Ah! no, there is no secret beneath their transparent gaze."

He rose and kissed her eyelids.

"Let me confess it to you, beloved; all through these five years one thing has made me happier day by day, I have been glad that you should have none of the natural affections which always encroach a little upon love. You had neither sister nor father nor mother nor friend; I was neither above nor below any other in thy heart; I was there alone. Clémence, say over again for me all the intimate sweet words that you have spoken so often; do not scold me; comfort me, I am very wretched. I have a hateful suspicion to reproach myself with, while you have nothing burning in your heart. Tell me, my darling, may I stay by your side? How should

two that are so truly one rest their heads on the same pillow, when one is at peace and the other in pain? . . . What can you be thinking of?" he cried abruptly, as Clémence looked meditative and confused, and could not keep back the tears.

"I am thinking of my mother," she said gravely. "You could not know, Jules, how it hurt your Clémence to recall her mother's last farewells, while your voice, the sweetest of all music, was sounding in her ears; to remember the solemn pressure of the chill hand of a dying woman, while I felt your caresses, and the overpowering sense of the sweetness of your love."

She made him rise, and held him tightly, with far more than man's strength, in her arms; she kissed his hair, her tears fell over him.

"Oh! I could be hewed into pieces for you! Tell me, beyond doubt, that I make you happy, that for you I am the fairest of women, that I am a thousand women for you. But you are loved as no other man can ever be loved. I do not

would you dethrone me in your heart? Between a lunatic and your wife, you believe the lunatic's word? Oh! Jules——"

She broke off, flung back the hair that fell over her forehead and throat, and in heartrending tones she added, "I have said too much. A word should be enough. If there is still a shadow across your mind and your forehead, however faint it may be, mind, it will kill me."

She shivered in spite of herself, and her face grew white.

"Oh! I will kill that man," said Jules to himself, as he caught up his wife and carried her to the bed. "Let us sleep in peace, dear angel," he said aloud; "I have put it all out of my mind, I give you my word."

The loving words were repeated more lovingly, and Clémence slept. Jules, watching his sleeping wife, told himself—"She is right. When love is so pure, a suspicion is like a blight. Yes, and a blight on so innocent a soul, so delicate a flower, is certain death."

If between two human creatures, each full of love for the other, with a common life at every moment, there should arise a cloud, the cloud will vanish away, but not without leaving some trace of its passage behind. Perhaps their love grows deeper, as earth is fairer after the rain; or perhaps the shock reverberates like distant thunder in a blue sky; but, at any rate, they cannot take up life where it was before, love must increase or diminish. At breakfast, M. and Mme. Jules showed each other an exaggerated attention. In their glances there was an almost forced gaiety which might have been expected of people eager to be deceived. Jules had involuntary suspicions; his wife, a definite dread. And yet, feeling sure of each other, they had slept. Was the embarrassment due to want of trust? to the recollection of the scene in the night? They themselves could not tell. But they loved each other, and were loved so sincerely, that the bitter-sweet impression could not fail to leave its traces; and each, besides, was so anxious to be the first to efface them, to be the first to return, that they could not but remember the original cause of a first discord. For those who love, vexation is out of the question,

"No," she said; "the weather is too bad."

And, indeed, it was pouring with rain. It was about half-past two o'clock. M. Desmarets went on the market, and thence to the Treasury. At four o'clock, when he came out, he confronted M. de Maulincour, who was waiting for him with the pertinacity bred of hate and revenge.

"I have some important information to give you, sir," he said, taking Desmarets by the arm. "Listen to me. I am an honorable man; I do not wish to send anonymous letters which would trouble your peace of mind; I prefer to speak directly. In short, you may believe that if my life were not at stake, I should never interfere between husband and wife, even if I believed that I had a right to do so."

"If you are going to say anything that concerns Mme. Desmarets," answered Jules, "I beg you to be silent, sir."

"If I keep silence, sir, you may see Mme. Jules in the dock beside a convict before very long. Now, am I to be silent?"

Jules' handsome face grew white, but seemingly he was calm again in a moment. He drew Maulincour under one of the porches of the temporary building then frequented by stockbrokers, and spoke, his voice unsteady with deep emotion:

"I am listening, sir, but there will be a duel to the death between us if——"

"Oh! I am quite willing," exclaimed M. de Maulincour. "I have the greatest respect for you. Do you speak of death, sir? You are not aware, I expect, that your wife probably employed somebody to poison me on Saturday evening? Yes, sir, since the day before yesterday, some extraordinary change has taken place in me. All the hairs of my head distil a fever and mortal languor that pierces through the bone; and I know perfectly well what man it was that touched my head at the dance."

M. de Maulincour told the whole story of his Platonic love for Mme. Jules and the details of the adventure with which this Scene opens. Anybody would have listened to him as attentively as Desmarets, but Mme. Jules' husband might be

expected to be more astonished than anybody else in the world. And here his character showed itself—he was more surprised than overwhelmed. Thus constituted a judge, and the judge of an adored wife, in his inmost mind he assumed a judicial directness and inflexibility of mind. He was a lover still; he thought less of his own broken life than of the woman; he heard, not his own grief, but a far-off voice crying to him, "Clémence could not lie! Why should she be false to you?"

"I felt certain that in M. de Funcal I recognized this Ferragus, whom the police believe to be dead," concluded M. de Maulincour, "so I put an intelligent man on his track at once. As I went home, I fortunately chanced to call to mind a Mme. Meynardie, mentioned in this Ida's letter, Ida being apparently my persecutor's mistress. With this one bit of information, my emissary speedily cleared up this ghastly adventure, for he is more skilled at finding out the truth than the police themselves."

"I am unable to thank you, sir, for your confidence," said

pered man, but he was likewise extremely sensitive; he shrank from confronting his wife with a lie. And yet those drops of water shed, as it were, a gleam of light which tortured his brain. He went downstairs to the porter's room.

"Fouquereau," he said, when he had made sure that they were alone, "three hundred francs per annum to you if you tell me the truth; if you deceive me, out you go; and if you mention my question and your answer to any one else, you will get nothing at all."

He stopped, looked steadily at the man, and then drawing him to the light of the window, he asked:

"Did your mistress go out this morning?"

"Madame went out at a quarter to three, and I think I saw her come in again half-an-hour ago."

"Is that true, upon your honor?"

"Yes, sir."

"You shall have the annual sum I promised you. But if you mention it, remember what I said; for if you do, you lose it all."

Jules went back to his wife.

"Clémence," he said, "I want to put my house accounts a bit straight, so do not be vexed if I ask you something. I have let you have forty thousand francs this year, have I not?"

"More than that," she answered. "Forty-seven."

"Could you tell me exactly how it was spent?"

"Why, yes. First of all, there were several outstanding bills from last year——"

"I shall find out nothing in this way," thought Jules. "I have gone the wrong way to work."

Just at that moment the man brought in a note. Jules opened it for the sake of appearances, but seeing the signature at the foot, he read it eagerly:—

"MONSIEUR,—To set your mind and our minds at rest, I take the step of writing to you, although I have not the privilege of being known to you; but my position, my age, and the fear that some misfortune may befall, compels me to beseech your forbearance in the distressing situation in which our af-

flicted family is placed. For some days past, M. Auguste de Maulincour has shown unmistakable symptoms of mental derangement; and we are afraid that he may disturb your happiness with the wild fancies of which he spoke to M. le Commandeur de Pamiers and to me, in the first fit of fever. We desire to give you warning of a malady which is still curable, no doubt; and as it might have very serious consequences for the honor of the family and my grandson's future, I count upon your discretion. If M. le Commandeur or I, monsieur, had been able to make the journey to your house, we should have dispensed with a written communication; but you will comply, I do not doubt, with the request of a mother who beseeches you to burn this letter.

"Permit me to add that I am with the highest regard,

"BARONNE DE MAULINCOURT *née* DE RIEUX."

"What tortures!" exclaimed Jules.

"What can be passing in your thoughts?" asked his wife, with intense anxiety in her face.

"Look here! Without meaning to play the Bartholo here, your bonnet has betrayed you. Are these not rain-drops? Then you must have gone out and caught the drops of rain as you looked about for a cab, or in coming in or out of the house to which you drove. Still, a woman can go out even if she has told her husband that she means to stay indoors; there is no harm in that. There are so many reasons for changing one's mind. A whim, a woman has a right to be whimsical, is that not so? You are not bound to be consistent with yourselves. Perhaps you forgot something; something to be done for somebody else, or a call, or a charitable errand? But there can be nothing to prevent a wife from telling her husband what she has done. How should one ever blush on a friend's breast? And it is not a jealous husband who speaks, my Clémence; it is the friend, the lover, the comrade."

He flung himself passionately at her feet.

"Speak, not to justify yourself, but to soothe an intolerable pain. I know for certain that you left the house. Well, what did you do? Where did you go?"

"Yes, Jules, I left the house," she said, and though her voice shook her face was composed. "But do not ask me anything more. Wait and trust me, or you may lay up lifelong regrets for yourself. Jules, my Jules, trust is love's great virtue. I confess it, I am too much troubled to answer you at this moment; I am a woman unapt at lying, and I love you, you know I love you."

"With all that shakes a man's belief and rouses his jealousy—for I am not the first in your heart, Clémence, it seems; I am not your very self?—well, with it all, I would still rather trust you, Clémence, trust your voice and those eyes of yours. If you are deceiving me, you would deserve——"

"Oh! a thousand deaths," she broke in.

"And I have not one thought hidden from you, while——"

"Hush," she cried, "our happiness depends upon silence between us."

"Ah! I will know all!" he shouted, with a burst of violent anger.

As he spoke a sound reached them, a shrill-tongued woman's voice raised to a scream in the ante-chamber.

"I will come in, I tell you! Yes, I will come in, I want to see her, I will see her!" somebody cried.

Jules and Clémence hurried into the drawing-room, and in another moment the door was flung open. A young woman suddenly appeared with two servants behind her.

"This woman would come in, sir, in spite of us. We told her once before that madame was not at home. She said she knew quite well that madame had gone out, but she had just seen her come in. She threatens to stop at the house door until she had spoken to madame."

"You can go," said M. Desmarets, addressing the servants.

"What do you want, mademoiselle?" he added, turning to the visitor.

The "young lady" was a feminine type known only in Paris; a type as much a product of the city as the mud or the curbstones in the streets, or the Seine water which is filtered

on the one hand, and a branding laugh upon the other; she is too fair and too foul; too much like a personification of that Paris which she provides with toothless old portresses, washerwomen, street-sweepers, and beggars; sometimes too with insolent comtesses and admired and applauded actress and opera singer. Twice in former times she even gave two queens, in all but name, to the Monarchy. Who could seize such a Protean woman-shape?

She is a very woman, less than a woman, and more than a woman. The painter of contemporary life can only give a few details, the general effect of so vast a subject, and some idea of its boundlessness.

This was a Paris grisette—a grisette, however, in her glory. She was the grisette that drives about in a cab; a happy, handsome, and fresh young person, but still a grisette, a grisette with claws and scissors; bold as a Spaniard, quarrelsome as an English prude instituting a suit for restitution of conjugal rights, coquettish as a great lady, and more outspoken; equal to all occasions, a typical "lioness," issuing from her little apartment.

Many and many a time had she dreamed of that establishment with its red cotton curtains and its furniture covered with Utrecht velvet, of the tea-table and the hand-painted china tea-service and the settee; the small square of velvet pile carpet, the alabaster timepiece and vases under glass shades, the yellow bedroom, the soft eiderdown quilt,—of all the joys of a grisette's life, in short. Now she had a servant, a superannuated member of her own profession, a veteran grisette with moustaches and good-conduct stripes. Now she went to the theatres and had as many sweetmeats as she liked; she had silk dresses and finery to soil and draggle, and all the joys of life from the point of view of the milliner's assistant, except a carriage of her own, a carriage being to the milliner's assistant's dreams what the marshal's baton is for the private soldier. Yes, all these things this particular grisette possessed in return for a real affection, or perhaps in spite of a real affection on her part; for others of her class will often exact

[illegible] one hour in the day, a sort of toll carelessly paid [illegible] space in some old man's clutches.

[illegible] person now confronting M. and Mme. Jules [illegible], which displayed so much white stocking that they [illegible] like an almost invisible black boundary line against [illegible] carpet. This kind of footgear, very neatly rendered by [illegible] comic drawings, is one of the Parisian grisette's peculiar charms of dress; but a still more unmistakable sign for observant eyes is the precision with which her gown is moulded to her figure, which is very clearly outlined. Moreover, the visitor was "turned out" in a green dress, to use the picturesque expression coined by the French soldier, a dress with a chemisette, which revealed a fine figure, fully displayed, for her Ternaux shawl would have slipped down to the floor if she had not held the two loosely-knotted ends in her grasp. She had a delicate face, a white skin and color in her cheeks, sparkling gray eyes, a very prominent rounded forehead, and carefully waved hair, which escaped from under a little bon-

"You are mistaken, mademoiselle," said Jules, in dull amazement; "my wife could not possibly——"

"Oh! so you are married, are you, the two of you?" said the grisette, evidently rather surprised. "Then it's far worse, sir, is it not, when a woman has a lawful husband of her own to have anything to do with a man like Henri——"

"But what Henri?" said Jules, taking Ida aside into another room lest his wife should overhear anything further.

"Well, then, M. Ferragus."

"But he is dead," protested Jules.

"What stuff! I went to Franconi's yesterday evening, and he brought me home again, as he ought to do. Your lady too can give you news of him. Didn't she go to see him at three o'clock? That she did, I know, for I was waiting for her in the street; being as a very nice man, M. Justin—perhaps you know him? a little old fogy that wears stays and has seals on his watch-chain—it was he that told me that I had a Mme. Jules for my rival. That name, sir, is well known among fancy names; asking your pardon, since it's your own, but Mme. Jules might be a duchess at court, Henri is so rich he can afford all his whims. It is my business to look after my own, as I have a right to do; for I love Henri, I do. He was my first fancy, and my love and the rest of my life is at stake. I am afraid of nothing, sir; I am honest, and I never told a lie yet, nor took a thing belonging to anybody whatever. If I had an empress for my rival I should go right straight to her, and if she took my husband that is to be from me, I feel that I could kill her, was she never so much an empress, for one fine woman is as good as another, sir——"

"That will do, that will do!" interrupted Jules. "Where do you live?"

"Number 14 Rue de la Corderie du Temple, sir. Ida Gruret, corset-maker at your service, sir; for we make a good many corsets for gentlemen."

"And this man Ferragus, as you call him, where does he live?"

"Why, sir" (tightening her lips), "in the first place, he is

not just 'a man'—he is a gentleman, and better off than you are, maybe. But what makes you ask me for his address, when your wife knows where he lives? He told me I was not to give it to anybody. Am I bound to give you an answer? I am not in the police court nor the confessional, the Lord be thanked, and I am not beholden to any one."

"And how if I offer you twenty, thirty, forty thousand francs to tell me his address?"

"Oh, not quite, my little dear; it's no go," said she, with a gesture learned in the streets, as accompaniment to her singular answer. "No amount of money would get that out of me. I have the honor to wish you good-evening.—Which way do you get out of this?"

Jules allowed her to go. He was stricken to earth. The whole world seemed to be crumbling away under him, the sky above had fallen with a crash.

"Dinner is ready, sir," said the footman.

For fifteen minutes the footman and Desmarets' manservant waited in the dining-room, but no one appeared. The

"But he goes to the Bourse, the master does.—This is the third time I have told him that dinner is ready," he added, after a pause; "you might as well talk to a statue."

Jules came in.

"Where is your mistress?" asked he.

"Madame has gone to bed, she has a sick headache," said the maid, assuming an important air.

"You can take the dinner away," said Jules, with much cool self-possession. "I shall keep madame company." And he went to his wife. She was crying, and stifling her sobs with her handkerchief.

"Why do you cry?" said Jules, using the formal *vous*. "You have no violence, no reproaches to expect from me. Why should I avenge myself? If you have not been faithful to my love, it is because you were not worthy of it——"

"Not worthy!"

The words repeated amid her sobs, and the tone in which they were spoken, would have softened any man but Jules.

"To kill you, a man must love more, perhaps, than I," he resumed; "but I have not the heart to do it, I would sooner make away with myself and leave you to your—your happiness—and to—whom——?"

He broke off.

"Make away with yourself!" cried Clémence. She flung herself at Jules' feet and clung about them; but he tried to shake her off, and dragged her to the bed.

"Leave me alone," said he.

"No, no, Jules! If you love me no longer, I shall die. Do you wish to know all?"

"Yes." He took her, held her forcibly in his grasp, sat down on the bedside, and held her between his knees; then he gazed dry-eyed at the fair face, now red as fire, and seamed with tear-stains. "Now, tell me," he said for the second time.

Clémence began to sob afresh.

"I cannot. It is a secret of life and death. If I told you, I . . . No, I *cannot*. Have pity, Jules!"

"You are deceiving me still," he said, but he replaced the formal *vous* by *tu*.

"Ah!" she cried, at this sign of relenting. "Yes, Jules, you may believe that I am deceiving you, now you shall know everything very soon."

"But this Ferragus, this convict that you go to see, this man enriched by crime, if he is not your lover, if you are not his——"

"Oh, Jules!"

"Well, is he your unknown benefactor, the man to whom we owe our success, as people have said before this?"

"Who said so?"

"A man whom I killed in a duel."

"Oh, God! one man dead already."

"If he is not your protector, if he does not give you money, and you take money to him, is he your brother?"

"Well," she said, "and if he were?"

M. Desmarets folded his arms.

"Why should this have been kept from my knowledge?" returned he. "Did you both deceive me—you and your mother? And do people go to see their brothers every day,

ı Daylight was at hand, and still Clémence lay awake. thoughts were busy with the murmur of conversation, h lasted for several hours, between the brothers, but no le word reached her through the thickness of the walls to a clue to the meaning of the prolonged conference. M. marets, the notary, went at length; and then, in the still- of the night, with that strange stimulation of the senses comes with passion, Clémence could hear the squeaking pen and the unconscious movements made by some one ly writing. Those who are accustomed to sit up through night, and have noticed the effect of deep silence on the of acoustics, know that a faint sound at intervals is easily d, when a continuous and even murmur is scarcely dis- uishable.

lémence rose, anxious and trembling. She forgot her lition, forgot that she was damp with perspiration, and, footed and without a dressing-gown, went across and ed the door. Luckily it turned noiselessly on its hinges. saw her husband, pen in hand, sitting fast asleep in his -chair. The candles were burning low in the sockets. She t forward, and on an envelope that lay sealed already, saw the words, "My Will."

he knelt down, as if at a graveside, and kissed her hus- d's hand. He woke at once.

Jules, dear, even criminals condemned to death are given w days' respite," she said, looking at him with eyes shin- with love and fever. "Your innocent wife asks for two —only two days. Leave me free for two days, and—— After that I shall die happy; at any rate, you will be y."

You shall have the delay, Clémence."

nd while she kissed her husband's hands in a pathetic ouring of her heart, Jules, fascinated by that cry of inno- e, took her in his arms and kissed her on the forehead, rly ashamed that he should still submit to the power of noble beauty.

Next morning, after a few hours of sleep, Jules went to his wife's room, mechanically obedient to his custom of never leaving home without first seeing her. Clémence was asleep. A ray of light from a chink in the highest window fell on the face of a woman worn out with grief. Sorrow had left traces on her brow already, and faded the fresh red of her lips. A lover's eyes could not mistake the significance of the dark marbled streaks and the pallor of illness, which took the place of the even color in her cheeks and the white velvet of her skin, the transparent surface over which all the feelings that stirred that fair soul so unconsciously flitted.

"She is not well," thought Jules. "Poor Clémence, may God protect us!"

He kissed her very gently on the forehead; she awoke, looked into her husband's face, and understood. She could not speak, but she took his hand, and her eyes grew soft with tears.

"I am innocent," she said, finishing her dream.

"You will not go out to-day, will you?" said Jules.

"Madame, as I meant to call on M. de Maulincour this very day, and to return the note to you, I thought I need not destroy it in spite of the request at the end. Here it is."

The dowager rang for her double-strength spectacles, and glanced down the sheet with every sign of the greatest astonishment.

"The handwriting is so exactly like mine, monsieur, that if we were not speaking of a quite recent event, I should be deceived by it myself. My grandson certainly is ill, monsieur, but his mind has not been affected the least bit in the world. We are puppets in the hands of wicked people; still, I cannot guess the object of this piece of impertinence. . . . You shall see my grandson, monsieur, and you will admit that he is perfectly sane."

She rang the bell again to ask if it were possible for the Baron to receive a visit from M. Desmarets. The footman brought an answer in the affirmative. Jules went up to Auguste de Maulincour's room, and found that young officer seated in an armchair by the fireside. He was too weak to rise, and greeted his visitor with a melancholy inclination of the head. The Vidame de Pamiers was keeping him company.

"M. le Baron," began Jules, "I have something to say of so private a nature that I should wish to speak with you alone."

"Monsieur," said Auguste, "M. le Commandeur knows all about this affair; you need not fear to speak before him."

"M. le Baron, you have disturbed and almost destroyed my happiness; and you had no right to do so. Until we know which of us must ask, or give satisfaction to the other, you are bound to give me your assistance in the dark ways to which you have suddenly brought me. So I have come to inquire the present address of this mysterious being who exercises such an unlucky influence on our lives, and seems to have some supernatural power at his orders. I received this letter yesterday, just as I came in after hearing your account of yourself."

Jules handed the forged letter.

"This Ferragus or Bourignard or M. de Funcal is a fiend incarnate!" shouted Maulincour. "In what hideous labyrinth

have I set foot? Whither am I going?—I was wrong, monsieur," he added, looking full at Jules, "but death [illegible] is the greatest expiation of all, and I am dying. [illegible] ask me anything you wish; I am [illegible]

"You should know where [illegible] absolutely must get to the bottom [illegible] all that I have [illegible] every moment i[illegible]

"Justin will [illegible]
The Vidame fl[illegible]

"Justin is [illegible]
hasty fashion, [illegible]

"Well," Au[illegible]
vants here kno[illegible]
at once to fin[illegible]
They will find [illegible]

The old Vida[illegible]

clean, had grown crooked; and now there was nothing for it but to use craft and lies. And Clémence, too, was using lies and craft with him. It was a sickening moment. Lost in depths of bitter thought, he stood forgetful of himself and motionless on the doorstep. Sometimes he gave way to despair which counseled flight; he would leave France and carry with him his love and all the illusions of unproved guilt; and then again, never doubting but that Clémence's letter was addressed to Ferragus, he cast about for ways of intercepting the reply sent by that mysterious being. Again, examining into this singular success since his marriage, he asked himself whether that slander which he had avenged was not after all a truth. At length, returning to Ferragus' answer, he reasoned with himself on this wise:—

"But will this Ferragus, so profoundly astute as he is, so consequent in the least things that he does; this man who sees, and foresees, and calculates, and even guesses our thoughts, will he send an answer? Is he not sure to employ some means

out whether madame is alone, at any rate I shall not be gulled like a fool."

His office windows looked into the street. As he stood with his face pressed against the panes, jealousy inspired him with a final stratagem. He determined to send his head-clerk to the Bourse in his carriage; the clerk should take a letter to a friend of his, another stockbroker, to whom he would explain his business transactions—he would beg his friend to take his place. His most difficult business he put off till the morrow, regardless of the rise and fall of stocks, and all the funds of Europe. Fair prerogative of love! Love eclipses all things else. The rest of the world fades away before it; and altar, throne, and government securities are as though they were not. At half-past three o'clock, just when the Bourse is all agog with rates and premiums, rises and falls, current accounts, and the rest of it, Jules looked up and saw Fouquereau with a beaming countenance.

"An old woman has just been here, sir; she is as sharp as they make them. Oh! she is an artful one, I can tell you. She asked for you and seemed put out to find you were not at home; then she gave me this letter here for madame."

Jules broke the seal with feverish anguish, but he dropped exhausted into his chair. The letter was a string of meaningless words, and quite unintelligible without a key. It was written in cipher.

"You can go, Fouquereau."

The man went.

"This mystery is deeper than the unplumbed sea. Oh, this is love beyond a doubt. Love, and love only, could be as sagacious, as ingenious as the writer of this letter. Oh, God! I will kill Clémence."

Even at that moment a bright idea burst upon his brain, and struck him so forcibly, that is seemed almost like the breaking out of light. In the old days of poverty and hard work before his marriage, Jules had made a real friend. The excessive delicacy with which Jules spared the susceptibilities of a poor and shy comrade, the respect that he paid his

friend, the tactful ingenuity with which he made that friend accept a share of his good fortune without a blush,—all these things had increased their friendship since those days. In spite of Desmarets' prosperity, Jacquet was faithful to him.

Jacquet, an honest man, and a toiler of austere life, had slowly made his way in that Department which of all others employs most rascality and most honesty. He was in the Foreign Office; the most delicate part of its archives was in his charge. He was a kind of departmental glow-worm, shedding light during his working hours on secret correspondence, deciphering and classifying despatches. Rather above the rank and file of the middle classes, he held the highest (subaltern) posts at the Foreign Office, and lived unrecognized; rejoicing in an obscurity which put him beyond reverses of fortune, and content to pay his debt to his fatherland in small coin. A born assistant-registrar, he enjoyed the respect that was due to him, in newspaper language. And, as an unknown patriot in a Government Department, he resigned himself to

"I want you to find out a secret for me, Jacquet; it is a matter of life and death."

"It is not about politics?"

"You are not the man I should come to if I wanted to know anything of that kind," said Jules. "No, it is a private affair, and I must ask you to keep it as secret as possible."

"Claude Joseph Jacquet, professional mute. Why, don't you know me?" laughed he. "My line of business is discretion."

Jules put the letter before him.

"This is addressed to my wife; I must have it read to me," he said.

"The devil! the devil! a bad business," said Jacquet, scrutinizing the document as a money-lender examines a negotiable bill. "Aha! a stencil cipher. Wait."

He left Jules alone in the office, but came back pretty soon.

"Tomfoolery, my friend. It is written with an old stencil cipher which the Portuguese ambassador used in M. de Choiseul's time after the expulsion of the Jesuits. Stay, look here."

Jacquet took up a sheet of paper with holes cut in it at regular intervals; it looked rather like the lace paper which confectioners put over their sugar-plums. When this was set over the sheet below, Jules could easily make sense of the words left uncovered.

"My dear Clemence,—Do not trouble yourself any more; no one shall trouble our happiness again, and your husband will put his suspicions aside. I cannot go to see you. However ill you may be, you must gather up your courage to come to me; summon up your strength, love will give it you. I have been through a most cruel operation for your sake, and I cannot stir out of bed. Moxas were applied yesterday evening to the nape of the neck and across the shoulders; it was necessary to cauterize pretty deeply. Do you understand? But I thought of you, and found the pain not intolerable. I have

left the sheltering roof of the embassy to baffle Maulincour, who shall not persecute us much longer; and here I am safe from all search at number 12 Rue des Enfants-Rouges, with an old woman, one Mme. Étienne Gruget, mother of that Ida, who shall shortly pay dear for her silly prank. Come to-morrow at nine o'clock. My room can only be reached by an inner staircase. Ask for M. Camuset. Good-bye till to-morrow. A kiss on thy forehead, my darling."

Jacquet gazed at Jules with a kind of shocked expression with a very real sympathy in it, and brought out his favorite invocations, "The devil! the devil!" in two distinct intonations.

"It seems clear to you, doesn't it?" said Jules. "Well, and yet, in the bottom of my heart a voice pleads for my wife, and that voice rises above all the pangs of jealousy. I shall endure the most horrid torture until to-morrow; but at last, to-morrow between nine and ten, I shall know all. I shall

half-past five——"

I am not in, simply give it to the porter, and tell him
l it up to madame."

you want me to-morrow?"

. Good-bye."

s soon reached the Place de la Rotonde du Temple,
ed his cabriolet, and walked down to the Rue des En-
fonges, to take a look at Mme. Étienne Gruget's abode.
ystery on which so many lives hung was to be cleared
e. Ferragus was there, and Ferragus held all the ends
threads in this obscure business.—Was not the connec-
tween Mme. Jules, her husband, and this man the
n knot of a tragedy stained even now with blood? Nor
the sword be wanting to cut asunder the tightest of
ds.

house belonged to the class commonly known as *caba-*
—an expressive name given by working people in Paris
chwork buildings, as they may be called. Several
, originally separate, have sometimes been run into
cording to the fancy of the various proprietors who
ively enlarged them; or they were begun and left un-
l for a time, and afterwards resumed and completed.
y dwellings are they that have passed, like sundry na-
nder the rule of several dynasties of capricious rulers.
rious stories and windows do not belong to each other,
ow one of the most picturesque of painter's words;
etail, even the decoration outside, clashes with the rest
uilding. The *cabajoutis* is to Parisian street architec-
at the *capharnaüm*, or lumber-room, is to the house—a
· rubbish-heap where the most unlikely things are shot
ogether pell-mell.

e. Étienne?" Jules asked of the portress.

functionary was installed in the great centre door-
a sort of hencoop, a little wooden house on wheels,
like the cabins which the police authorities put up at
abstand.

?" said the portress, laying down the stocking which

she was knitting. The living accessories which contribute to the general effect of any portion of the great monster Paris, fit in, as a rule, remarkably well with the character of their surroundings. The porter, concierge, Swiss, or whatever you may choose to call this indispensable muscle in the monster's economy, is always in keeping with the quarter of which he is an integral part; very often he is the Quarter incarnate. The concierge of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, an idle being embroidered at every seam, speculates in stocks and shares; in the Chaussée d'Antin, the porter is a comfortable personage; in the neighborhood of the Bourse, he reads the newspaper; in the Faubourg Montmartre, he carries on some industry or other. In low neighborhoods the portress is a worn-out prostitute; in the Marais she keeps herself respectable, she is apt to be peevish, she has her "ways."

At sight of Jules, the portress of the Rue des Enfants-Rouges stirred up the dying embers of block fuel in her foot-warmer, taking a knife for the purpose. Then she said

"Here it is," said Jules to himself.

He tugged at an old blackened bell-pull, with a fawn's foot attached, and heard the smothered tinkle of a little cracked bell, and the yapping of an asthmatic little dog. He could tell by the sound that the bell made inside that the room was so lumbered up with things that there was no room for an echo—a characteristic trait of workmen's lodgings and little households generally, where there is neither space nor air. Jules looked about involuntarily for the gilliflowers, and found them at last on the window-sill, between two pestiferous sinks. Here were flowers, a garden two feet long and six inches wide, and a sprouting grain of wheat—all life condensed into that narrow space, and not one of life's miseries lacking! A ray of sunlight shone down, as if in pity on the sickly blossoms and the superb green column of wheat-stalk, bringing out the indescribable color peculiar to Paris slums; dust, grease, and inconceivable filth incrusted and corroded the rubbed, discolored, damp walls, the worm-eaten balusters, the gaping window-sashes, the doors that once had been painted red. In another moment he heard an old woman's cough and the sound of heavy feet dragging painfully along in list slippers. This must be Ida Gruget's mother. She opened the door, came out upon the landing, raised her face to his, and said:

"Ah! it's M. Bocquillon! Why, no it isn't. My word! how like you are to M. Bocquillon! You are a brother of his perhaps? What can I do for you, sir? Just step inside."

Jules followed her into the first room, and caught a general impression of bird-cages, pots and pans, stoves, furniture, little earthenware dishes full of broken meat, or milk for the dog and the cats; a wooden clock-case, blankets, Eisen's engravings, and a heap of old ironmongery piled up with the most curiously grotesque effect. It was a genuine Parisian *capharnaüm;* nothing was lacking, not even a few odd numbers of the *Constitutionnel.*

"Just come in here and warm yourself," said the Widow Gruget, but prudence prevailed. Jules was afraid that Fer-

ragus might overhear, and wondered whether the bargain which he proposed to make had not better be concluded in the outer room; just then, however, a hen came cackling down a staircase and cut short his inward conference. He made up his mind and followed Ida's mother into the next room, where a fire was burning. A wheezy little pug-dog, a dumb spectator, followed them, and scrambled up on an old stool. Mme. Gruget's request to come in and get warm was prompted by the very coxcombry of poverty on the brink of destitution. Her stock-pot completely hid a couple of smouldering sticks which ostentatiously shunned each other. A skimmer lay on the floor, with the handle among the ashes. On the wooden ledge above the fireplace, amid a litter of wools, cottonreels, and odds and ends, needed for the manufacture of trimmings, stood a little waxen crucifix under a shade made of pieces of glass joined together with strips of bluish paper. Jules looked round at the furniture with a curiosity in which self-interest was blended, and in spite of himself he showed his secret satisfaction.

and charred foot-warmer, and then at the table covered with crockery, silks, and patterns of work in worsted and cotton, with the neck of a wine-bottle rising out of the middle of the litter, and said within himself, "This woman has some passion, some failing that she keeps quiet; she is in my power."—Aloud he said with a significant gesture, "I have come to order some galoon of you, madame;" then lowered his voice to add, "I know that you have a lodger here, a man that goes by the name of Camuset."

The old woman looked up at once, but there was not a sign of surprise in her countenance.

"Look here, can he overhear us? There is a fortune involved for you, mind you."

"You can speak, sir, there is nothing to be afraid of; there is nobody here. There is somebody upstairs, but it is quite impossible that he should hear you."

"Ah! cunning old thing! She can give you a Norman's answer," thought Jules. "We may come to terms.—You need not trouble yourself to tell a lie, madame. To begin with, bear in mind that I mean no harm whatever to you, nor to your invalid lodger with his blisters, nor to your daughter Ida the staymaker, Ferragus' sweetheart. You see, I know all about it. Never mind, I have nothing to do with the police, and I want nothing that is likely to hurt your conscience.

"A young lady will come here to-morrow between nine and ten to have some talk with your daughter's sweetheart. I want to be somewhere near, so that I can hear and see everything without being heard or seen. You must arrange this for me, and I will give you two thousand francs down, and an annuity of six hundred francs. My notary shall draw up the agreement this evening in your presence, and I will give the money into his hands to pay over to you to-morrow after this meeting at which I wish to be present, when I shall have proof of your good faith."

"It will not do any harm to my daughter, will it, my dear gentleman?" she returned, on the watch like a suspicious cat.

"None whatever, madame. But, at the same time, your daughter is behaving very badly to you, it seems to me. When a man as rich and powerful as Ferragus is fond of her, it ought to be easy to make you more comfortable than you appear to be."

"Ah, my dear gentleman, not so much as a miserable ticket for the Ambigu or the Gaieté, where she can go whenever she likes. It is shameful. And I that sold my silver spoons, and am eating now off German silver in my old age, all to apprentice that girl, and give her a business where she could coin gold if she chose. For as to that, she takes after her mother; she is as neat-fingered as a fairy, it must be said in justice to her. At any rate, she might as well hand over her old silk dresses to me, so fond as I am of wearing silk; but no, sir. She goes to the *Cadran bleu,* to dine at fifty francs a head, and rolls in her carriage like a princess, and doesn't care a rap for her mother. God Almighty! we bring these scatter-brained girls into the world, and it is not the best

children that forget all about you before they have so much as shut the door."

She drew her handkerchief from her pocket, and a lottery ticket fell out, but she picked it up in a moment.

"*Quien!* that is the rate-collector's receipt."

Jules suddenly guessed the reason of the prudent parsimony of which the mother complained, and felt the more sure that the Widow Gruget would agree to his proposal.

"Very well, madame," he said, "in that case you will accept my offer."

"Two thousand francs down, did you say, sir? and six hundred francs a year?"

"I have changed my mind, madame. I will promise you only three hundred francs of annuity. The arrangement suits me better. But I will pay you five thousand francs down. You would rather have it so, would you not?"

"Lord, yes, sir."

"You will be more comfortable, you can go to the Ambigu Comique, or Franconi's, or anywhere else, and go comfortably in a cab."

"Oh, I do not care about Franconi's at all, being as you don't hear talk of it. And if I agree to take the money, sir, it is because it will be a fine thing for my child. And I shall not be living on her. Poor little thing, after all, I don't grudge her such pleasure as she gets. Young things must have amusement, sir. And so, if you will assure me that I shall be doing nobody any harm——"

"Nobody," repeated Jules. "But see now, how are you going to set about it?"

"Oh, well, sir, if M. Ferragus has just a little drink of poppy water to-night, he will sleep sound, the dear man! And much he stands in need of sleep, in such pain as he is, for he suffers so that it makes you sorry to see it. And by the by, just tell me what sort of a notion it is for a healthy man to have his back burned to cure the neuralgia that does not trouble him once in two years?—But to go back to our business, sir. My neighbor that lives just above has left her

key with me; her room is next door to M. Ferragus' bedroom. She has gone to the country for ten days. So if you have a hole made to-night in the partition wall, you can look in and hear at your ease. There is a locksmith, a great friend of mine, a very nice man, that talks like an angel; he will do that for me, and nobody any the wiser."

"Here are a hundred francs for him. You must come this evening to M. Desmarets'; he is a notary; here is his address. The paper will be ready at nine o'clock, but—mum!"

"Right; mum, as you say. Good-day, sir."

Jules went home again, almost soothed by the certainty of knowing everything to-morrow. He found the letter, sealed flawlessly again, in the porter's room.

"How are you?" he asked his wife, in spite of the coolness between them, so difficult is it to break from the old habits of affection.

"Rather better, Jules," she answered in winning tones; "will you dine here with me?"

almost well again. There is a truce. Jules, come closer, let me kiss you."

Jules could not forego the joy of Clémence's kiss, and yet it was not without something like remorse in his heart. He felt small before this woman, in whose innocence he was always tempted to believe. There was a sort of sorrowful gladness about Clémence. A chastened hope shone through the troubled expression of her face. They seemed both alike unhappy that the deceit must be kept up; another kiss, and they must tell each other all; they could endure their pain no longer.

"To-morrow evening, Clémence?"

"No, monsieur, to-morrow at noon you shall know everything, and you will kneel before your wife. Ah! no, you shall not humble yourself. No, all is forgiven you.—No, you have done no wrong. Listen. Yesterday you shattered me very ruthlessly, but life perhaps might not have been complete if I had not known that anguish; it is a dark shadow to bring out the brightness of days like heaven."

"You are bewitching me," Jules exclaimed, "and you would give me remorse."

"Poor love, fate overrules us, and I cannot help my destiny. I am going out to-morrow."

"When?"

"At half-past nine."

"Clémence, you must be very careful. You must consult Dr. Desplein and old Haudry."

"I shall consult my own heart and courage only."

"I will leave you free. I shall not come to see you till noon."

"Will you not stay with me a little while to-night? I am not ill now——"

Jules finished his work and came back to sit with her. He could not keep away. Love was stronger in him than all his griefs.

Next morning, at nine o'clock, Jules slipped out of the

Ferragus. "Those two unlucky letters that cost us so dear have been destroyed, so I shall be somebody, socially speaking; a man among men again, and I am quite as good as the sailor whom the fishes have eaten. God knows whether it is for my own sake that I have taken a count's title."

"Poor Gratien! you are the best head among us, our beloved brother, the Benjamin of the band. You know that."

"Good-bye; take good care of my Maulincour."

"You can set your mind at rest on that score."

"Hey, Marquis!" cried the convict.

"What?"

"Ida is capable of anything after the scene yesterday evening. If she flings herself into the river, I certainly shall not fish her out; she will the better keep the secret of my name, the only secret she knows; but look after her, for, after all, she is a kind creature."

"Very well."

The stranger went. Ten minutes afterwards Jules heard the unmistakable rustle of silk, and almost knew the sound of his wife's footsteps, not without a fevered shiver.

"Well, father, poor father, how are you? How brave you are!" It was Clémence who spoke.

"Come here, child," said Ferragus, holding out his hand.

And Clémence bent her forehead for his kiss.

"Let us see you, what is it, poor little girl? What new troubles?——"

"Troubles, father? It is killing me, killing the daughter who loves you so. As I wrote to tell you yesterday, you absolutely must use that fertile brain of yours to find some way of seeing poor Jules this very day. If you only knew how good he has been to me in spite of suspicions that seemed so well founded! Love is my life, father. Do you wish to see me die? Oh! I have been through so much as it is, and my life is in danger, I feel it."

"To lose you, my child! to lose you for a miserable Parisian's curiosity! I would set Paris on fire. Ah! you know what a lover is, but what a father is you do not know."

"You frighten me, father, when you look like that. Do not put two such different sentiments in the balance. I had my husband before I knew that my father was living——"

"If your husband was the first to set a kiss upon your forehead, I was the first to let tears fall there," said Ferragus. "Reassure yourself, Clémence, open your heart to me. I love you well enough to be happy in the knowledge that you are happy; although your father is almost nothing in your heart, while you fill his."

"Ah, God! such words make me too happy. You make me love you more than ever, and it seems to me that I am robbing Jules. But just think that he is in despair, my good father. What shall I tell him in two hours' time?"

"Child, do you think that I waited for your letter to save you from this threatened unhappiness? What came to those who took it into their heads to meddle with your happy life, or to come between us? Why, have you never recognized a second providence watching over you? And you

fearlessly in both your hearts, and say to the world, 'This is my child!'—in short, I had visions of being a father at my ease."

"Oh! father, father!"

"After many efforts, after searching the world over, my friends have found me a man's shape to fill," continued Ferragus. "In a few day's time I shall be M. de Funcal, a Portuguese count. There, dear child, there are few men of my age that would have patience to learn Portuguese and English, with which that confounded naval officer was perfectly acquainted."

"My dear father!"

"Every contingency is provided for. In a few days His Majesty, John VI., King of Portugal, will be my accomplice. So you only need a little patience when your father had much. But for me it was quite natural. What would I not do to reward your devotion during these three years? To come so dutifully to see your old father, risking your happiness as you did."

"Father!" Clémence took Ferragus' hands and kissed them.

"Come! a little more courage, Clémence; let us keep the fatal secret to the end. Jules is not an ordinary man; and yet, do we know whether with his lofty character and great love he will not feel something like disrespect for the daughter of——"

"Ah! you have read your child's soul," cried Clémence; "I have no fear but that," she added, in a heartrending tone. "The thought freezes my blood. But remember, father, I have promised him the truth in two hours."

"Well, my child, tell him to go to the Portuguese Embassy to see the Comte de Funcal, your father; I will be there."

"And how about M. de Maulincour, who talked about Ferragus? Ah, dear! to tell lie upon lie, what torture, father!"

"To whom are you speaking? Yet a few days, and no man alive can give me the lie. And besides, M. de Maulincour is in no condition to remember anything by this time—— There, there, silly child, dry your tears, and bear in mind that——"

A dreadful cry rang through the next room, where Jules Desmarets was hiding.

"My girl, my poor girl!" The wail came through the loophole above the cupboard; Ferragus and Mme. Jules were terror-stricken by it.

"Go and see what it is, Clémence."

Clémence fled down the narrow staircase, found the door of Mme. Gruget's room standing wide open, and heard her voice ring out overhead. The sound of sobbing attracted her to the fatal room, and these words reached her ears as she entered:

"It is you, sir, with your notions, that have been the death of her!"

"Hush, wretched woman!" exclaimed Jules, trying to stop her cries with his pocket-handkerchief.

"Murder! Help!" cried the Widow Gruget. At that moment Clémence came in, saw her husband, shrieked aloud, and fled.

a deal, the poor dear. But I shall have as much courage to drown myself as he had to have himself burned. There are some corsets ready; see that they are sent home. And pray God for your daughter. IDA."

"Take the letter to M. de Funcal, in the next room. He is the only man that can save my daughter, if it is not too late." And Jules vanished, flying like a criminal when the deed is done. His legs shook under him. His swelling heart was sending a hotter and fuller tide through his veins, with a mightier pulse than he had ever known before. The most conflicting thoughts filled his mind, and yet one idea prevailed above them all. He had been disloyal to the one whom he loved best in the world; he could not compound with his conscience, its voice grew in proportion to the extent of the wrong that he had done, till the clamor filled him, as passion had filled his inmost being during the bitterest hours of the suspense which had shaken him but a short while ago. He dared not go home, and spent most of the day in wandering about Paris. Upright as he was, he shrank from confronting the blameless brows of the wife he had not rightly valued. The sin is in proportion to the purity of the conscience; and an act which for some is scarcely a mistake will weigh like a crime upon a few white souls. Is there not, indeed, a divine significance in that word white? and does not the slightest spot on maiden garments degrade them at once to the level of the beggar's rags? Between the two there is but the difference between misfortune and error. Repentance is not proportioned to the sin; God makes no distinctions; it is as hard to wipe out one stain as to wash away the sins of a lifetime.

These thoughts lay heavily on Jules' soul. Justice is not more inexorable than passion, nor more ruthless in its reasoning: for passion has a conscience of its own, infallible as instinct. He went home again in despair, overwhelmed with a sense of the wrong he had done; but, in spite of himself, joy in his wife's innocence was visible in his pale face.

He went to her room with a fast-throbbing heart, and found her lying in bed. She was in a high fever. He sat down by the bedside, took her hand, and kissed it and covered it with tears.

"Dear angel, they are tears of repentance," he said, when they were alone.

"What is there to repent of?" she asked.

She bent her head down on the pillow as she spoke, and shut her eyes, and lay quite still, fearing, with a mother's, an angel's delicacy, to betray her pain and alarm her husband. The whole woman was summed up in those words. There was a long silence. Jules, fancying that Clémence was asleep, stole out to ask Joséphine about her mistress.

"Madame came in half dead, sir. We sent for M. Haudry."

"Has he been? What did he say?"

"Nothing, sir. He did not seem satisfied, he said that no one was to be allowed in the room except the nurse, and

yet a while longer, that I may expiate my sins by long adoration. . . . Heroic as a daughter; what word could describe her as a wife?"

Clémence opened her eyes; they were full of tears.

"You hurt me," she said in a weak voice.

It was growing late. Dr. Haudry came and asked Jules to leave the room while he saw his patient; and when he came out afterwards there was no need to ask any questions—a gesture told all.

"Send for any of my colleagues in whom you have most confidence," said the doctor; "I may be mistaken."

"But, doctor, tell me the truth. I am not a child, I can bear it; and besides, I have the strongest reasons for wishing to know it, there are accounts to settle——"

"Mme. Jules is death stricken," said the doctor. "There is something on her mind which complicates the physical illness; the situation was dangerous as it was, and repeated imprudence has made it worse——Getting out of bed in the night with bare feet; going out on foot yesterday, and in the carriage to-day, when I forbade it, she has done her best to kill herself. Still my verdict is not final; there is youth, and astonishing nervous strength—it might be worth while to risk all to save all by some violent reagent; but I could not take it upon myself to prescribe the treatment, I should not even advise it. I should oppose it in consultation."

Jules went back to the room again. For eleven days he stayed night and day by his wife's bedside, sleeping only in the daytime, with his head on the bedfoot. Never did any man carry the ambition of devotion so far as Jules Desmarets. In a jealous anxiety to do everything himself, he would not allow any one else to perform the least service for his wife: he sat with her hand in his, as if in this way he could give of his own vitality to her. There were times of doubt and fallacious joy, good days, and an improvement, and crises, and the dreadful reverberations of the coming death, that hesitates while life hangs in the balance, but strikes at last. Mme. Jules was never too weak to smile; she was sorry

for her husband, knowing that very soon he would be left alone. It was the twofold agony of life and love; but as life ebbed, love grew stronger.

Then came a dreadful night, when Clémence suffered from the delirium that always comes before death in young creatures. She talked aloud of her happy love, of her father, of her mother's deathbed revelations, and the charge she had laid upon her daughter. Clémence was struggling, not for life, but for the passionate love that she could not let go.

"God in Heaven!" she cried out, "do not let him know how I want to have him die with me."

Jules, unable to bear the sight, happened to be in the next room and so did not hear the wish that he would have fulfilled.

When the crisis was over, Mme. Jules found strength. Next day she looked lovely and peaceful once more; she talked, she began to hope, and made a pretty invalid's toilet. She

withered skin. The eyes were pale and fixed, the mouth gaped hideously, like the mouth of an imbecile, or of some debauchee dying of excess. Not the faintest spark of intelligence was left to the forehead, nor indeed to any other feature; nor was there any appearance of color or of circulating blood in the flabby flesh. These were the shrunken, dissolving remains of what had been a human being, a man reduced to the condition of the monstrosities preserved in spirits at the Muséum. Jules fancied he could see Ferragus' terrible head rising above that visage, and his hate shrank appalled at the completeness of the vengeance. Clémence's husband could find it in his heart to pity the unrecognizable wreck of what had been so lately a young man.

"The duel has taken place," said the Vidame.

"Monsieur de Maulincour has taken many lives," exclaimed Jules in distress.

"And the lives of his nearest and dearest," added the old noble. "His grandmother is dying of grief, and I perhaps shall follow her to the tomb."

Mme. Jules grew worse from hour to hour on the day after the visit. She took advantage of a momentary strength to draw a letter from her pillow, and gave it quickly to Jules with a sign which no one could mistake; she wished to spend her last breath of life in a kiss. He took it, and she died.

Jules dropped down half dead, and was taken away to his brother's house. There, as in the midst of tears and ravings he bewailed his absence of the day before, his brother told him how anxious Clémence had been that he should not be present during the Church's administration of the last sacrament to the dying, that rite so terribly impressive for a sensitive imagination.

"You could not have borne it," said his brother. "I myself could scarcely endure to see it, and every one broke out into weeping. Clémence looked like a saint. She summoned up her strength to bid us good-bye; it was heartrending to hear that voice for the last time. And when she asked pardon for any involuntary unkindness to those who had served her, a wail went up among the sobs, a wail——"

"Enough, that will do——"

He wanted to be alone to read his wife's last thoughts, now that she, the woman whom the world had admired, had faded away like a flower:—

"This is my will, my dearest. Why should not people dispose of their heart's treasures, as of everything else that is theirs? The love in my heart—was it not all that I had? And here I want to think of nothing but love; it was all that your Clémence brought you, it is all that she can leave you when she dies. Jules, I am loved again, I can die a happy woman. The doctors will have their theories of my death; but no one knows the real cause but I. I will tell you about it, in spite of the pain it may give you. I am dying because I kept a secret that could not be told, but I will not carry away a secret unsaid in the heart that is wholly yours.

"I was nurtured and brought up in complete solitude, far away from the vices and deceits of the world, by the amiable

the first time I smoothed my hair beneath a wreath of almond blossom, and added a few knots of satin ribbon to my white gown, thinking how pretty they looked, and wondering about this world that I was to see, and felt curious to see; well, Jules, even then, that simple girlish coquetry was for you; at my first entrance into that new world I saw *you*—— I saw your face; it stood out from all the others; you were handsome, I thought; your voice and your manner prepossessed me in your favor; and when you came up and spoke to me, and your forehead flushed and your voice was tremulous—the memory of that moment sets my heart throbbing even now as I write to you to-day, when I think of it for the last time. Our love has been from the first the keenest of sympathies, and it was not long before we divined each other, and began to share, as we have shared ever since, the uncounted joys of love.

"From that day my mother had but the second place in my heart. I told her so, and she smiled, my adorable mother! And since then I have been yours—yours wholly. That is my life, my whole life, my dear husband.

"And this is what remains to be said.

"One evening, a few days before my mother died, she told me the secret of her life, not without hot tears. I loved her more, far more, when I heard in the presence of the priest who absolved her that there was such a thing as passion condemned by the world and the Church. Yet, surely, God must be merciful when love is the sin of souls as loving as hers, even though that angel could not bring herself to repent of it. She loved with all her heart, Jules, for her heart was love. And so I prayed for her every day, without judging her. From that time I knew why her mother's love had been so deep and tender; from that time I knew too that in Paris there was some one living for whom I was everything—life and love. I knew, besides, that your success was due to him, and that he liked you, and that he was an outlaw with a blighted name, and that these things troubled him less for his own sake than for mine—for both our sakes.—My mother had been his one

comfort; I promised to take her place now that she was dead. With all the enthusiasm of an unsophisticated nature, I thought of nothing but the joy of sweetening the bitterness of her last moments, so I pledged myself to continue her work of secret charity—the charity of the heart.

"I saw my father for the first time by the bed on which my mother had just drawn her last breath. When he raised his tear-filled eyes, it was to find all his dead hopes once more in me. I vowed, not to lie, but to keep silence; and what woman could have broken that silence? Therein lay my mistake, a mistake expiated by death—I could not trust you, Jules. But fear is so natural to a woman, especially to a wife who knows all that she has to lose. I was afraid for my love. It seemed to me that my father's secret might cost me my happiness; and the more I loved, the more I dreaded the loss of love. I dared not confess this to my father; it would have hurt him, and in his position any wound smarts keenly. But while he said not a word to me, he felt my fears. The true

"I could not live in continual dread of a word or a look, one word which might never be uttered, one glance that would never be given; but, I cannot help it—*I am afraid!* I have your love till I die, that comforts me. I have known for four years past that father and his friends have all but turned the world upside down to act a lie to the world. They have bought a dead man, a reputation, and a fortune, and all to give a new life to a living man, and a social position to me—all this for your sake, for our sakes! We were to know nothing about it. Well, my death will probably save my father from the necessity of lying any longer, for he will die when I am dead.

"So, farewell, Jules. I have put my whole heart here in this letter. When I show you my love in the innocence of its dread, do I not leave you my very soul? I should not have had strength to tell you this, but I could write it for you.

"I have just made confession of the sins of my lifetime to God; I have promised, it is true, to think of nothing now but the Father in Heaven; but I could not resist the pleasure of confession to you, that are all to me upon earth. Alas! who would not forgive me this last sigh between the life that is no more and the life to come. So, farewell, Jules, my beloved; I am going to God, with whom there is love unclouded for evermore, to whom you also will come one day. There, at the foot of the Throne of God, together for evermore, we shall love through all the ages. That hope alone can comfort me. If I am worthy to go first, I shall follow you through your life, my spirit will be with you and around you, for you must live on here below awhile. Lead a holy life, to rejoin me the more surely. You can do so much good here on this earth! Is it not an angel's mission for a stricken soul to spread happiness around, to give that which he has not?

"I leave the unhappy to your care; how should I be jealous of their smiles, their tears? We shall find a great charm in these sweet charities. Cannot we be together still, if you will associate my name, your Clémence's name, with every kindly deed? When two have loved as we have loved, Jules, there is

nothing left but God; God does not lie, God does not fail. Give all your love to Him, I ask it of you. Cultivate good in those who suffer, comfort the afflicted among the Church on earth.

"Adieu, dear heart that I have filled. I know you, I know that you will not love twice; and I can die happy in a thought that would make any wife glad. Yes, I shall lie buried in your heart. Now that I have told you the story of my childhood, is not my whole life poured into your heart? I shall never be driven from it after I am dead. You have only known me in the flower of my youth; I shall leave nothing but regrets behind, and no disenchantment. Jules, that is a very happy death.

"May I ask one thing of you that have understood me so well, one thing needless to ask, no doubt—the fulfilment of a woman's fancy, of a wish prompted by a jealousy to which all women are subject. I beg of you to burn all that belonged to us, to destroy our room, and everything that may recall our

Clémence lying on her deathbed, fair as a saint, her hair smoothed over her brows, her hands folded. She had been laid already in her shroud. The light of the tall candles fell upon a priest at his prayers, on Joséphine, who was crying in a corner, and on two men by the bed. One of these was Ferragus. He stood upright and motionless, gazing dry-eyed at his daughter, you might have taken his face for a bronze statue; he did not see Jules. The other was Jacquet—Jacquet to whom Mme. Jules had always been kind. He had felt for her the respectful friendship that brings warmth to the heart without troubling it, a softened passion, love without its longings, and its tumult, and now he had come religiously to pay his debt of tears, to bid a long adieu to his friend's wife, and set a first and last kiss on the forehead of the woman of whom he had tacitly made a sister.

All was silent there. This was not the Terrible Death of the Church, nor the pageantry of Death that passes through the streets; it was Death that glides in under the roof, Death in his pathetic aspects; this was a lying in state for the heart amid tears shed in secret.

Jules sat down beside Jacquet, squeezed his friend's hand, and thus without a word they stayed till the morning. When the candles burned faintly in the dawn, Jacquet thought of the painful scenes to come, and led Jules away into the next room. For a moment Clémence's husband looked full at her father, and Ferragus looked at Jules. Anguish questioned and sounded the depths of anguish, and both understood at a glance. A flash of rage glittered for an instant in Ferragus' eyes.

"It is your doing!" he thought.

"Why not have trusted me?" the other seemed to retort.

So might two tigers have seen the uselessness of a conflict, after eyeing each other during a moment of hesitation, without so much as a growl.

"Jacquet, did you see to everything?" asked Jules.

"Yes, to everything; and everywhere some one else had been before me and given orders and paid."

"He is snatching his daughter from me!" shouted Jules, in a paroxysm of despair.

He dashed into the bedroom. The father had gone. Clémence had been laid in her leaden coffin. One or two workmen were preparing to solder down the lid, and Jules retreated aghast. At the sound of the hammer he broke out into dull weeping.

"Jacquet," he said at length, "one idea stays with me after this dreadful night, just one thought, but I must realize it, cost what it may. Clémence shall not lie in a Paris cemetery. She shall be cremated, and I will keep her ashes beside me. Do not say a word about it to me, but just arrange to have it done. I shall shut myself up in *her* room and stay there till I am ready to go. No one shall come in but you to tell me what you have done. There, spare for nothing."

That morning Mme. Jules' coffin lay under the archway with lighted candles round it, and afterwards was removed to St. Roch. The whole church was hung with black. The kind

and the child-choristers sang alternately; and never perhaps was the *Dies iræ* more deeply impressive than at that moment, never did it strike an icier chill to the nerves of Christians by accident of birth, assembled there by chance, curiosity, and greed of sensation. From the side chapels children's voices, shrill with grief, rose wailing in the chorus. A dull note of dismay reverberated through the church; cries of anguish answered wails of terror on every side. That awful music spoke of agony unknown on earth, of secret friendship weeping for the dead. Never has any known religion given so powerful a rendering of the terrors of the soul, stripped violently of the body, and tossed as by tempest into the presence of the intolerable Majesty of God. Before that clamor of clamors, artists and their most impassioned work must shrink abashed. No, nothing can stand beside that music which gathers up all human passions, galvanizing them into a life beyond the grave, bringing them, yet palpitating, into the presence of the living God, the Avenger. Man's life, with all its developments, is embraced by that Canticle of Death; for the cries of children, mingled with the notes of deeper voices, recall the pains of cradled infancy, swelled by the sum of all the pain of life's later stages, by the full-toned bass, and the quavering notes of old men and of priests. Does not the volume of strident harmony, full of thunder and lightnings, speak to the most undaunted imagination, to the ice-bound heart, nay, to philosophists themselves? As you hear it, it seems that God thunders. The vaults of every church are cold no longer; they quiver, and find a voice, and pour forth fear with all the might of their echoes. You seem to see visions of the uncounted dead rising and holding up their hands. It is not a father, a wife or child, that lies beneath the black drapery; it is Humanity emerging from the dust. It is impossible to be just to the Apostolic and Roman Catholic Church until you have passed through a supreme sorrow, and wept for the beloved dead lying beneath the cenotaph; until you have heard all the emotion which fills your heart, interpreted by that hymn of despair, by those cries that overwhelm

"This is no affair of mine," said the Minister. "The thing concerns the Prefect of Police. And what is more: no law gives a husband the custody of his wife's body, nor has a father a right to a child's corpse. It is a serious matter. It ought to be looked into, besides, in the interests of the public. The city of Paris might suffer. In short, if the matter were referred directly to me, I could not give a decision *hic et nunc;* a report would be required."

In the administrative system a "report" answers much the same ends as limbo in theology. Jacquet had met with the "report" craze before; nor had he neglected previous opportunities of groaning over the absurdities of red tape. He knew that since the administrative Revolution of 1804, when the report had carried all before it in Government departments, the Minister had not yet been found that would take it upon himself to have an opinion, or give a decision on any matter, however small, until the thing had been winnowed, sifted, and thoroughly scrutinized by the scribblers and

his own passions. But when he came to talk to Jules, there was nothing for it but to deceive his friend; the unhappy man was in a high fever, and for a couple of days he stayed in bed.

That evening at dinner the Minister chanced to mention that the fancy had taken some one in Paris to have his wife's body cremated in the Roman fashion. And for a moment classical funeral rites were the talk of the clubs. As things ancient were coming into fashion, several people were of the opinion that it would be a fine thing to revive the funeral pyre for distinguished personages. Some were for, and others against, the idea. Some held that there were so many great men, that the practice would raise the price of fuel; they opined that with a nation so fond of the mental exercise of changing its opinions, it would be a ridiculous thing to see a whole Longchamp of ancestors trotted out in their urns at the expiration of a lease; while if the urns happened to be valuable, creditors (a race that never respect anything) would seize upon them, and they, with their contents of honorable dust, would be put up to public auction. Others retorted that it was scarcely possible for a man to insure a permanent residence for his grandparents in Père Lachaise; for that in time the city of Paris would be compelled to order a St. Bartholomew of its dead. The cemeteries were invading the open country, and threatened to encroach upon the corn land of Brie. In short, the question raised one of the futile and ingenious discussions which, in Paris, too often aggravates deep-seated evils. Happily for Jules, he knew nothing of the conversation, jokes, and epigrams with which his sorrow supplied the town.

The Prefect of Police took offence because M. Jacquet had gone straight to the Minister to avoid the delays and matured wisdom of the Board of Works. The exhumation of Mme. Jules' body was a question within the jurisdiction of the municipal police. Wherefore the Police Department was elaborating a sharp answer to the petition. A single demand is enough, the administration has a tight hold, and a thing once in its grasp is like to go a long way. Any matter, moreover,

may be referred to the Council of State, another piece of machinery very hard to set in motion. Another day went by, and Jacquet made his friend understand that the idea must be given up; that in a city where the number of "tears" embroidered on the black trappings are prescribed, where the law recognizes seven classes of funerals, where land in which to bury the dead is sold by its weight in silver, where grief is exploited on a system of double entry, and the prayers of the Church are sold dear, or the vestry puts in a claim for a few extra voices in the *Dies iræ*—any deviation from the beaten rut traced out for grief by the authorities was impossible.

"It would have been one joy in my misery," said Jules; "I meant to go somewhere, a long way off, to die, and I wished when I lay in the grave to have Clémence in my arms. I did not know that officialdom could put out its claws to reach us even in our coffins."

He would go to see whether there was a little room for him beside his wife. So the friends went together to Père La-

complain of him; he plays the despot at his ease. Neither is his abode exactly a place of business, albeit there are offices and books to be kept, and clerks to keep them, and receipts and expenditure and profits. And the gatekeeper himself is neither a Swiss nor a concierge nor a porter, for the door is always yawning wide for the dead; and though there certainly are monuments to be kept in order, he is not there to look after them. He is, in short, an anomaly which cannot be defined; his office is akin in one way or another to every power in existence, and yet he is a nobody, for his authority, like Death, by which it lives, lies completely beyond the pale. Nevertheless, exception as he is, he holds his tenure from the City of Paris, a creature as chimerical as the emblematical vessel on her coat-of-arms; an imaginary being swayed by hundreds of paws and claws which seldom move in concert; and as a result, her public servants are, to all intents and purposes, fixtures. The cemetery-keeper, therefore, is the concierge promoted to the rank of a public servant, a permanent element amid dissolution.

His place, for that matter, is no sinecure. No one can be buried till the gatekeeper has seen the permit; and he is bound to give account of his dead. He can lay his finger on a spot in that huge burying ground to point out the six feet of earth in which some day you will lay all that you love, or hate, as the case may be—the woman you love or your unloved cousin. For, mind you, to this lodge all loves and hates must come at the last, and are duly docketed and passed through the office. The man keeps a register of sleeping-places for the dead; they go down on his list when they go down into the grave.

The gatekeeper has custodians under him, and gardeners and grave-diggers and assistants. He is a personage. Mourners are not brought into direct contact with him as a rule; he only comes forward if something serious occurs, if one dead man is mistaken for another, or if a body is exhumed for a murder case, or a corpse comes to life again. The bust of the reigning sovereign presides in his room. Possibly he

keeps other busts of departed monarchs, with various royal, imperial, or semi-royal persons, in a cupboard somewhere, a sort of miniature Père Lachaise for changes in the Government. In other respects, he is a public servant; an excellent man, a good husband and father, epitaphs apart; but—so much varied emotion has passed under his eyes in the shape of hearses! he has seen so many tears shed, both sham and real, and been acquainted with grief in so many shapes and in so many faces—with six millions of eternal sorrows, in short! For him, grief means a stone slab an inch thick, four feet high by twenty-two inches wide. As for regrets, they are one of the things to be put up with in his profession, and he never dines but he has witnessed torrents of tears shed by inconsolable affliction. Every other emotion finds him kindly and sympathetic; he too can shed tears over the tragic end of a stage hero like M. Germeuil in *L'Auberge des Adrets,* he is moved when the man in the butter-colored breeches is murdered by Robert Macaire; but when it comes to a real genuine

gate), "here comes Colonel de Maulincour's funeral, go out for the permit.—My word! it is a fine funeral," he added. "He has not been long about following his grandmother. Some families seem to drop off for a wager. They have such bad blood, have those Parisians!"

Jacquet tapped him on the arm.

"Sir, the person of whom I am speaking was Mme. Jules Desmarets, the stockbroker's wife."

"Oh, I know!" returned he, looking at Jacquet. "Thirteen mourning coaches at the funeral, weren't there? and only one relation apiece in the first dozen. It was so queer that we noticed it——"

"Take care, sir; M. Jules is with me, he might overhear you; and you ought not to talk like that."

"I beg your pardon, sir, you are right. Excuse me, I took you for the next-of-kin.—Mme. Jules is in the Rue du Maréchal Lefebvre, side walk Number 4," he continued, after consulting a plan of the ground; "she lies between Mlle. Raucourt of the Comédie Française and M. Moreau-Malvin, a butcher in a big way of business. There is a white marble monument on order for him; it will be one of the finest things in the cemetery here, and that's a fact."

"We are no nearer, sir," Jacquet broke in.

"And that is true," said the other, looking round.

"Jean!" he called, as a man came in sight. "Show these gentlemen the way to Mme. Jules' grave, the stockbroker's wife. You know! Next to Mlle. Raucourt's, where there is a bust."

And the friends set out with their conductor; but before they reached the steep path which leads to the higher part of the cemetery, they must run the gauntlet of a score or more of stone-cutters, carvers, and makers of wrought-iron work, who came up to insinuate in honeyed accents that "if monsieur would like to have something put up we could do it for him very reasonably——"

Jacquet was glad enough to be there to stand between his friend and words intolerable for bleeding hearts. They

reached the spot where she lay. At the sight of the rough sods and the row of pegs driven in by the laborers to mark out the space for the iron railings, Jules leaned upon Jacquet's shoulder, raising his head at intervals to give a long look at the little patch of clay where he must leave all that remained of her for whom and through whom he still lived.

"How hard for her to lie there!"

"But she is not there!" protested Jacquet; "she lives in your memory. Come away; let us leave this horrid place, where the dead are tricked out like women at a ball."

"How if we took her out of it?"

"Is it possible?"

"Anything is possible!" cried Jules. Then, after a pause, "So I shall come here some day; there is room for me."

Jacquet succeeded in getting him out of the inclosure. The tombs inclosed in those sprucely-kept chessboard compartments marked out by iron railings are covered with inscriptions and sculptured palms, and tears as cold as the marble

Jules caught a glimpse of the view. At his feet, in the long valley of the Seine, between the low ridges of Vaugirard and Meudon, Belleville and Montmartre, lay the real Paris, in a blue haze of its own smoke, now sunlit and transparent. He glanced from under his eyelids over the forty thousand houses of the city, and waved his hand towards the space between the column of the Place Vendôme and the cupola of the Invalides.

"There she was taken from me," he cried, "by the fatal curiosity of a world which seeks bustle and excitement for the sake of excitement and bustle."

Eight or nine miles further away down the Seine valley, in a little village on one of the lower slopes of those ridges of hill, between which the great restless city lies, like a child in its cradle, another sad death scene was taking place; but here there was none of the funeral pomp of Paris—there were no torches, no tall candle, no mourning coaches hung with black, no prayers of the Church; this was death reduced to the bare fact. And this was the fact. A girl's body stranded that morning on the bank, among the reeds that grow in the Seine mud. Some dredgers on their way to work caught sight of it as they went up the river in their crazy boat.

"Hullo; fifty francs for us!" cried one.

"Right you are!" said the other.

They came close up to the dead body.

"She is a very fine girl."

"Let us go and give notice."

And the two dredgers, first covering the corpse with their jackets, went off to the mayor; and that worthy was not a little puzzled to know how to draw up an official report of the discovery.

The rumor spread with the telegraphic speed peculiar to neighborhoods where communications are uninterrupted; the gossip on which the world battens, and scandal, tittle-tattle, and slander rush in to fill the vacuum between any given points. In a very short time people came to the mayor's office to relieve that gentleman of any difficulty, and among them they converted the official report into an ordinary certi-

ficate of death. Through their assiduity the girl's body was identified; she was proved to be Mlle. Ida Gruget, staymaker, of No. 14 Rue de la Corderie du Temple. At this stage of the proceedings the police intervened, and the Widow Gruget, the girl's mother, appeared with her daughter's farewell letter. While the mother sighed and groaned, a medical man ascertained that death had ensued from asphyxia and an access of venous blood to the pulmonary organs. That was all.

The inquest being over, and particulars filled in, the authorities gave permission for the burial of the body. The curé of the place declined to allow the procession to enter the church or to pray for the repose of the dead. So an old peasant woman sewed Ida Gruget in her shroud, she was laid in a rough coffin made of deal boards, and carried to the churchyard on four men's shoulders. Some few country women had the curiosity to follow, telling the story of the death with comments of pitying surprise. An old lady charitably kept the widow, and would not allow her to join the sad little pro-

"Was there any service for this woman that you are burying?"

"No, sir. M. le Curé would not allow it. She is the first person buried here that is not of this parish. Everybody knows everybody else hereabouts. Does monsieur——? Hullo! he is gone!"

Several days slipped by. A man in black came to the house in the Rue de Ménars; the stranger did not wish to speak to Jules; he went to Mme. Jules' room and left a large porphyry vase there, bearing the inscription:

INVITA LEGE,

CONJUGI MOERENTI

FILIOLÆ CINERES

RESTITUIT

AMICIS XIII JUVANTIBUS

MORIBUNDUS PATER

"What a man!" exclaimed Jules, bursting into tears.

In one week Jules had carried out all his wife's wishes, and set his own affairs in order. He sold his professional connection to a brother of Martin Falleix's, and left Paris behind him, while the municipality was still debating whether or no a citizen had any legal claim to his wife's dead body.

Who has not met on the Paris boulevards, at a street corner, under the arcades of the Palais Royal—anywhere, in short, as chance may determine—some stranger, man or woman, whose face sets a host of confused thoughts springing up in his brain? It grows suddenly interesting at sight, perhaps because some personal singularity suggests a stormy life; perhaps gestures, gait, air, and costume all combine to present a curious whole; perhaps because a searching glance or an indescribable something makes a sudden, strong impression before you can explain the cause very clearly to yourself. On the morrow, other thoughts, other pictures of Paris life sweep

away the passing dream. But if you happen to meet the same person again; if he is always passing along the street at the same hour (like a clerk at the registrar's office, for instance, whose presence is required at marriages eight hours daily); if he is one of those wandering mortals who seem to be a part of the furniture of the streets of Paris, and you see him again and again in public places, on first nights, or in those restaurants of which he is the fairest ornament—then that figure becomes a tenant in your memory, and stays there like an odd volume of a novel without a conclusion.

You are tempted to go up to the stranger and ask, "Who are you?—Why are you sauntering about the streets?—What right have you to wear a crumpled collar, a cane with an ivory knob, and a seedy waistcoat?—Why those blue spectacles with double glasses?" or "What makes you cling to that *muscadin's* cravat?"

Some among these errant creatures belong to the progeny of Terminus, god of boundaries; they say nothing to your

one of these things, and not one of them; it is a desert. All about that nameless spot rise the walls of the Foundling Hospital, the Hôpital Cochin, the Capuchins, La Bourbe, the Hospice de la Rochefoucauld, the Deaf and Dumb Asylum, and the hospital of the Val-de-Grâce. All the sin and suffering of Paris, in fact, finds a refuge in its neighborhood; and that nothing may be wanting in so philanthropic a quarter, students of science repair thither to study the ebb and flow of the tides and latitude and longitude. M. de Chateaubriand too established the Infirmerie Marie Thérèse not very far away, and the Carmelites founded a convent near by. In that desert the sound of bells never ceases, every stroke represents one of the solemn moments in man's life; the mother in travail, the new-born babe, the dying laborer, the nun at prayer, perishing vice, shivering age, disappointed genius. Only a few paces away lies the Cimetière du Mont Parnasse, whither shabby funerals go all day long from the crowded Faubourg Saint-Marceau.

Players at bowls have monopolized this esplanade with its view of Paris,—gray-headed, homely, good-natured worthies are they, who continue the line of our ancestors, and can only be compared as to externals with their public, the moving gallery which follows them about. The man before alluded to as new to this deserted quarter was an assiduous spectator of the game, and certainly might be said to be the most striking figure in these groups; for if it is permissible to classify Parisians zoologically, the other bystanders unmistakably belonged to the mollusk species. The newcomer would walk sympathetically with the jack, the small ball at which the others are aimed, the centre of interest in the game; and when it came to a stand, he would lean against a tree, and watch as a dog watches his master, while the bowls flew or rolled past. You might have taken him for the fantastic tutelar spirit of the jack. He never uttered a word. The players themselves, as zealous fanatics as could be found in any religious sect, had never taken him to task for his persistent silence, though some free-thinkers among them held that the man was deaf and dumb. Whenever there was occasion to

measure the distance between the bowls and the jack, the stranger's cane was taken as the standard of measurement. The players used to take it from his ice-cold fingers without a word, or even a friendly nod. The loan of the cane was a kind of "easement" which he tacitly permitted. If a shower came on he stayed beside the jack—the slave of the bowls, the guardian of the unfinished game. He took rain and fine weather equally as a matter of course; like the players, he was a sort of intermediate species between the stupidest Parisian and the most intelligent of brutes. In other respects he was pale and withered-looking, absent-minded, and careless of his dress. He often came without his hat. His square-shaped head and bald, sallow cranium showed through his white hair, like a beggar's knee thrust through a hole in his breeches. He shambled uncertainly about with his mouth open; his vacant eyes were never turned to the sky, he never raised them indeed, and always seemed to be looking for something on the ground. At four o'clock an old woman would come for him and take

II.

THE DUCHESSE DE LANGEAIS

To Franz Liszt.

In a Spanish city on an island in the Mediterranean, there stands a convent of the Order of Barefoot Carmelites, where the rule instituted by St. Theresa is still preserved with all the first rigor of the reformation brought about by that illustrious woman. Extraordinary as this may seem, it is none the less true. Almost every religious house in the Peninsula, or in Europe for that matter, was either destroyed or disorganized by the outbreak of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars; but as this island was protected through those times by the English fleet, its wealthy convent and peaceable inhabitants were secure from the general trouble and spoliation. The storms of many kinds which shook the first fifteen years of the nineteenth century spent their force before they reached those cliffs at so short a distance from the coast of Andalusia.

If the rumor of the Emperor's name so much as reached the shore of the island, it is doubtful whether the holy women kneeling in the cloisters grasped the reality of his dream-like progress of glory, or the majesty that blazed in flame across kingdom after kingdom during his meteor life.

In the minds of the Roman Catholic world, the convent stood out pre-eminent for a stern discipline which nothing had changed; the purity of its rule had attracted unhappy women from the furthest parts of Europe, women deprived of all human ties, sighing after the long suicide accomplished in the breast of God. No convent, indeed, was so well fitted for that complete detachment of the soul from all earthly

things, which is demanded by the religious life, albeit on the continent of Europe there are many convents magnificently adapted to the purpose of their existence. Buried away in the loneliest valleys, hanging in mid-air on the steepest mountain sides, set down on the brink of precipices, in every place man has sought for the poetry of the Infinite, the solemn awe of Silence; in every place man has striven to draw closer to God, seeking Him on mountain peaks, in the depths below the crags, at the cliff's edge; and everywhere man has found God. But nowhere, save on this half-European, half-African ledge of rock could you find so many different harmonies, combining so to raise the soul, that the sharpest pain comes to be like other memories; the strongest impressions are dulled, till the sorrows of life are laid to rest in the depths.

The convent stands on the highest point of the crags at the uttermost end of the island. On the side towards the sea the rock was once rent sheer away in some globe-cataclysm; it rises up a straight wall from the base where the waves gnaw

tinually in mind of the End and the way, is in truth a thoroughly Spanish conception. But now surround this picture by the Mediterranean, and a burning sky, imagine a few palms here and there, a few stunted evergreen trees mingling their waving leaves with the motionless flowers and foliage of carved stone; look out over the reef with its white fringes of foam in contrast to the sapphire sea; and then turn to the city, with its galleries and terraces whither the townsfolk come to take the air among their flowers of an evening, above the houses and the tops of the trees in their little gardens; add a few sails down in the harbor; and lastly, in the stillness of falling night, listen to the organ music, the chanting of the services, the wonderful sound of bells pealing out over the open sea. There is sound and silence everywhere; oftener still there is silence over all.

The church is divided within into a sombre mysterious nave and narrow aisles. For some reason, probably because the winds are so high, the architect was unable to build the flying buttresses and intervening chapels which adorn almost all cathedrals, nor are there openings of any kind in the walls which support the weight of the roof. Outside there is simply the heavy wall structure, a solid mass of gray stone further strengthened by huge piers placed at intervals. Inside, the nave and its little side galleries are lighted entirely by the great stained-glass rose-window suspended by a miracle of art above the centre doorway; for upon that side the exposure permits of the display of lacework in stone and of other beauties peculiar to the style improperly called Gothic.

The larger part of the nave and aisles was left for the townsfolk, who came and went and heard mass there. The choir was shut off from the rest of the church by a grating and thick folds of brown curtain, left slightly apart in the middle in such a way that nothing of the choir could be seen from the church except the high altar and the officiating priest. The grating itself was divided up by the pillars which supported the organ loft; and this part of the structure, with its carved wooden columns, completed the line of the arcading

in the gallery carried by the shafts in the nave. If any inquisitive person, therefore, had been bold enough to climb upon the narrow balustrade in the gallery to look down into the choir, he could have seen nothing but the tall, eight-sided windows of stained glass beyond the high altar.

At the time of the French expedition into Spain to establish Ferdinand VII. once more on the throne, a French general came to the island after the taking of Cadiz, ostensibly to require the recognition of the King's government, really to see the convent and to find some means of entering it. The undertaking was certainly a delicate one; but a man of passionate temper, whose life had been, as it were, but one series of poems in action, a man who all his life long had lived romances instead of writing them, a man pre-eminently a Doer, was sure to be tempted by a deed which seemed to be impossible.

To open the doors of a convent of nuns by lawful means! The metropolitan or the Pope would scarcely have permitted it! And as for force or stratagem—might not any indiscretion

heart; the heart exaggerates everything; the heart weighs the fall of a fourteen-year-old Empire and the dropping of a woman's glove in the same scales, and the glove is nearly always the heavier of the two. So here are the facts in all their prosaic simplicity. The facts first, the emotions will follow.

An hour after the General landed on the island, the royal authority was re-established there. Some few Constitutional Spaniards who had found their way thither after the fall of Cadiz were allowed to charter a vessel and sail for London. So there was neither resistance nor reaction. But the change of government could not be effected in the little town without a mass, at which the two divisions under the General's command were obliged to be present. Now, it was upon this mass that the General had built his hopes of gaining some information as to the sisters in the convent; he was quite unaware how absolutely the Carmelites were cut off from the world; but he knew that there might be among them one whom he held dearer than life, dearer than honor.

His hopes were cruelly dashed at once. Mass, it is true, was celebrated in state. In honor of such a solemnity, the curtains which always hid the choir were drawn back to display its riches, its valuable paintings and shrines so bright with gems that they eclipsed the glories of the ex-votos of gold and silver hung up by sailors of the port on the columns in the nave. But all the nuns had taken refuge in the organ-loft. And yet, in spite of this first check, during this very mass of thanksgiving, the most intimately thrilling drama that ever set a man's heart beating opened out widely before him.

The sister who played the organ aroused such intense enthusiasm, that not a single man regretted that he had come to the service. Even the men in the ranks were delighted, and the officers were in ecstasy. As for the General, he was seemingly calm and indifferent. The sensations stirred in him as the sister played one piece after another belong to the small number of things which it is not lawful to utter; words are powerless to express them; like Death, God, Eternity, they can only be realized through their one point of contact with

humanity. Strangely enough, the organ music seemed to belong to the school of Rossini, the musician who brings most human passion into his art. Some day his works, by their number and extent, will receive the reverence due to the Homer of music. From among all the scores that we owe to his great genius, the nun seemed to have chosen *Moses in Egypt* for special study, doubtless because the spirit of sacred music finds therein its supreme expression. Perhaps the soul of the great musician, so gloriously known to Europe, and the soul of this unknown executant had met in the intuitive apprehension of the same poetry. So at least thought two dilettanti officers who must have missed the Théâtre Favart in Spain.

At last in the *Te Deum* no one could fail to discern a French soul in the sudden change that came over the music. Joy for the victory of the Most Christian King evidently stirred this nun's heart to the depths. She was a Frenchwoman beyond mistake. Soon the love of country shone out,

often! and now this nun had chosen the song to express an exile's longing, amid the joy of those that triumphed. Terrible sensation! To hope for the resurrection of a lost love, to find her only to know that she was lost, to catch a mysterious glimpse of her after five years—five years, in which the pent-up passion, chafing in an empty life, had grown the mightier for every fruitless effort to satisfy it!

Who has not known, at least once in his life, what it is to lose some precious thing; and after hunting through his papers, ransacking his memory, and turning his house upside down; after one or two days spent in vain search, and hope, and despair; after a prodigious expenditure of the liveliest irritation of soul, who has not known the ineffable pleasure of finding that all-important nothing which had come to be a kind of monomania? Very good. Now, spread that fury of search over five years; put a woman, put a heart, put Love in the place of the trifle; transpose the monomania into the key of high passion; and, furthermore, let the seeker be a man of ardent temper, with a lion's heart and a leonine head and mane, a man to inspire awe and fear in those who come in contact with him—realize this, and you may, perhaps, understand why the General walked abruptly out of the church when the first notes of a ballad, which he used to hear with a rapture of delight in a gilt-paneled boudoir, began to vibrate along the aisles of the church in the sea.

The General walked away down the steep street which led to the port, and only stopped when he could not hear the deep notes of the organ. Unable to think of anything but the love which broke out in volcanic eruption, filling his heart with fire, he only knew that the *Te Deum* was over when the Spanish congregation came pouring out of the church. Feeling that his behavior and attitude might seem ridiculous, he went back to head the procession, telling the alcalde and the governor that, feeling suddenly faint, he had gone out into the air. Casting about for a plea for prolonging his stay, it at once occurred to him to make the most of this excuse, framed on the spur of the moment. He declined, on a plea

of increasing indisposition, to preside at the banquet given by the town to the French officers, betook himself to his bed, and sent a message to the Major-General, to the effect that temporary illness obliged him to leave the Colonel in command of the troops for the time being. This commonplace but very plausible stratagem relieved him of all responsibility for the time necessary to carry out his plans. The General, nothing if not "catholic and monarchical," took occasion to inform himself of the hours of the services, and manifested the greatest zeal for the performance of his religious duties, piety which caused no remark in Spain.

The very next day, while the division was marching out of the town, the General went to the convent to be present at vespers. He found an empty church. The townsfolk, devout though they were, had all gone down to the quay to watch the embarkation of the troops. He felt glad to be the only man there. He tramped noisily up the nave, clanking his spurs till the vaulted roof rang with the sound; he

thing in response to a skilled touch. Surely it is in some sort a pedestal on which the soul poises for a flight forth into space, essaying on her course to draw picture after picture in an endless series, to paint human life, to cross the Infinite that separates heaven from earth? And the longer a dreamer listens to those giant harmonies, the better he realizes that nothing save this hundred-voiced choir on earth can fill all the space between kneeling men and a God hidden by the blinding light of the Sanctuary. The music is the one interpreter strong enough to bear up the prayers of humanity to heaven, prayer in its omnipotent moods, prayer tinged by the melancholy of many different natures, colored by meditative ecstasy, upspringing with the impulse of repentance,—blended with the myriad fancies of every creed. Yes. In those long vaulted aisles, the melodies inspired by the sense of things divine are blended with a grandeur unknown before, are decked with new glory and might. Out of the dim daylight, and the deep silence broken by the chanting of the choir in response to the thunder of the organ, a veil is woven for God, and the brightness of His attributes shines through it.

And this wealth of holy things seemed to be flung down like a grain of incense upon the fragile altar raised to Love beneath the eternal throne of a jealous and avenging God. Indeed, in the joy of the nun there was little of that awe and gravity which should harmonize with the solemnities of the *Magnificat*. She had enriched the music with graceful variations, earthly gladness throbbing through the rhythm of each. In such brilliant quivering notes some great singer might strive to find a voice for her love, her melodies fluttered as a bird flutters about her mate. There were moments when she seemed to leap back into the past, to dally there now with laughter, now with tears. Her changing moods, as it were, ran riot. She was like a woman excited and happy over her lover's return.

But at length, after the swaying fugues of delirium, after the marvelous rendering of a vision of the past, a revulsion

swept over the soul that thus found utterance for itself. With a swift transition from the major to the minor, the organist told her hearer of her present lot. She gave the story of long melancholy broodings, of the slow course of her moral malady. How day by day she deadened the senses, how every night cut off one more thought, how her heart was slowly reduced to ashes. The sadness deepened shade after shade through languid modulations, and in a little while the echoes were pouring out a torrent of grief. Then on a sudden, high notes rang out like the voices of angels singing together, as if to tell the lost but not forgotten lover that their spirits now could only meet in heaven. Pathetic hope! Then followed the *Amen*. No more joy, no more tears in the air, no sadness, no regrets. The *Amen* was the return to God. The final chord was deep, solemn, even terrible; for the last rumblings of the bass sent a shiver through the audience that raised the hair on their heads; the nun shook out her veiling of crape, and seemed to sink again into the grave from which she had risen for a

glories of God; of God, whom we always represent surrounded with the fires of love and seistrons of gold—music and light and harmony. Is not He the Cause and the End of all our strivings?

The French General guessed rightly that here in the desert, on this bare rock in the sea, the nun had seized upon music as an outpouring of the passion that still consumed her. Was this her manner of offering up her love as a sacrifice to God? Or was it Love exultant in triumph over God? The questions were hard to answer. But one thing at least the General could not mistake—in this heart, dead to the world, the fire of passion burned as fiercely as in his own.

Vespers over, he went back to the alcalde with whom he was staying. In the all-absorbing joy which comes in such full measure when a satisfaction sought long and painfully is attained at last, he could see nothing beyond this—he was still loved! In her heart love had grown in loneliness, even as his love had grown stronger as he surmounted one barrier after another which this woman had set between them! The glow of soul came to its natural end. There followed a longing to see her again, to contend with God for her, to snatch her away—a rash scheme, which appealed to a daring nature. He went to bed, when the meal was over, to avoid questions; to be alone and think at his ease; and he lay absorbed by deep thought till day broke.

He rose only to go to mass. He went to the church and knelt close to the screen, with his forehead touching the curtain; he would have torn a hole in it if he had been alone, but his host had come with him out of politeness, and the least imprudence might compromise the whole future of his love, and ruin the new hopes.

The organ sounded, but it was another player, and not the nun of the last two days whose hands touched the keys. It was all colorless and cold for the General. Was the woman he loved prostrated by emotion which well-nigh overcame a strong man's heart? Had she so fully realized and shared an unchanged, longed-for love, that now she lay dying on her

bed in her cell? While innumerable thoughts of this kind perplexed his mind, the voice of the woman he worshiped rang out close beside him; he knew its clear resonant soprano. It was her voice, with that faint tremor in it which gave it all the charm that shyness and diffidence gives to a young girl; her voice, distinct from the mass of singing as a *prima donna's* in the chorus of a finale. It was like a gold or silver thread in dark frieze.

It was she! There could be no mistake. Parisienne now as ever, she had not laid coquetry aside when she threw off worldly adornments for the veil and the Carmelite's coarse serge. She who had affirmed her love last evening in the praise sent up to God, seemed now to say to her lover, "Yes, it is I. I am here. My love is unchanged, but I am beyond the reach of love. You will hear my voice, my soul shall enfold you, and I shall abide here under the brown shroud in the choir from which no power on earth can tear me. You shall never see me more!"

gravity how many sisters there were in the convent, and asked for particulars of its endowment and revenues, as if from courtesy he wished to hear the good priest discourse on the subject most interesting to him. He informed himself as to the manner of life led by the holy women. Were they allowed to go out of the convent, or to see visitors?

"Señor," replied the venerable churchman, "the rule is strict. A woman cannot enter a monastery of the order of St. Bruno without a special permission from His Holiness, and the rule here is equally stringent. No man may enter a convent of Barefoot Carmelites unless he is a priest specially attached to the services of the house by the Archbishop. None of the nuns may leave the convent; though the great Saint, St. Theresa, often left her cell. The Visitor or the Mothers Superior can alone give permission, subject to an authorization from the Archbishop, for a nun to see a visitor, and then especially in a case of illness. Now we are one of the principal houses, and consequently we have a Mother Superior here. Among other foreign sisters there is one Frenchwoman, Sister Theresa; she it is who directs the music in the chapel."

"Oh!" said the General, with feigned surprise. "She must have rejoiced over the victory of the House of Bourbon."

"I told them the reason of the mass; they are always a little bit inquisitive."

"But Sister Theresa may have interests in France. Perhaps she would like to send some message or to hear news."

"I do not think so. She would have come to ask me."

"As a fellow-countryman, I should be quite curious to see her," said the General. "If it is possible, if the Lady Superior consents, if——"

"Even at the grating and in the Reverend Mother's presence, an interview would be quite impossible for anybody whatsover; but, strict as the Mother is, for a deliverer of our holy religion and the throne of his Catholic Majesty, the rule might be relaxed for a moment," said the confessor, blinking. "I will speak about it."

"How old is Sister Theresa?" inquired the lover. He

dared not ask any questions of the priest as to the nun's beauty.

"She does not reckon years now," the good man answered, with a simplicity that made the General shudder.

Next day before siesta, the confessor came to inform the French General that Sister Theresa and the Mother consented to receive him at the grating in the parlor before vespers. The General spent the siesta in pacing to and fro along the quay in the noonday heat. Thither the priest came to find him, and brought him to the convent by way of the gallery round the cemetery. Fountains, green trees, and rows of arcading maintained a cool freshness in keeping with the place.

At the further end of the long gallery the priest led the way into a large room divided in two by a grating covered with a brown curtain. In the first, and in some sort public half of the apartment, where the confessor left the newcomer, a wooden bench ran round the wall, and two or three chairs, also of wood, were placed near the grating. The ceiling con-

confessed a weakling in a monastery; he was born to act, to live out a life of work; he is evading a man's destiny in his cell. But what man's strength, blended with pathetic weakness, is implied by a woman's choice of the convent life! A man may have any number of motives for burying himself in a monastery; for him it is the leap over the precipice. A woman has but one motive—she is a woman still; she betrothes herself to a Heavenly Bridegroom. Of the monk you may ask, "Why did you not fight your battle?" But if a woman immures herself in the cloister, is there not always a sublime battle fought first?

At length it seemed to the General that that still room, and the lonely convent in the sea, were full of thoughts of him. Love seldom attains to solemnity; yet surely a love still faithful in the breast of God was something solemn, something more than a man had a right to look for as things are in this nineteenth century? The infinite grandeur of the situation might well produce an effect upon the General's mind; he had precisely enough elevation of soul to forget politics, honors, Spain, and society in Paris, and to rise to the height of this lofty climax. And what in truth could be more tragic? How much must pass in the souls of these two lovers, brought together in a place of strangers, on a ledge of granite in the sea; yet held apart by an intangible, unsurmountable barrier! Try to imagine the man saying within himself, "Shall I triumph over God in her heart?" when a faint rustling sound made him quiver, and the curtain was drawn aside.

Between him and the light stood a woman. Her face was hidden by the veil that drooped from the folds upon her head; she was dressed according to the rule of the order in a gown of the color become proverbial. Her bare feet were hidden; if the General could have seen them, he would have known how appallingly thin she had grown; and yet in spite of the thick folds of her coarse gown, a mere covering and no ornament, he could guess how tears, and prayer, and passion, and loneliness had wasted the woman before him.

An ice-cold hand, belonging, no doubt, to the Mother Superior, held back the curtain. The General gave the enforced witness of their interview a searching glance, and met the dark, inscrutable gaze of an aged recluse. The Mother might have been a century old, but the bright, youthful eyes belied the wrinkles that furrowed her pale face.

"Mme. la Duchesse," he began, his voice shaken with emotion, "does your companion understand French?" The veiled figure bowed her head at the sound of his voice.

"There is no duchess here," she replied. "It is Sister Theresa whom you see before you. She whom you call my companion is my mother in God, my superior here on earth."

The words were so meekly spoken by the voice that sounded in other years amid harmonious surroundings of refined luxury, the voice of a queen of fashion in Paris. Such words from the lips that once spoke so lightly and flippantly struck the General dumb with amazement.

"The Holy Mother only speaks Latin and Spanish," she

"Do you know this gentleman?" she asked, with a keen glance.

"Yes, Mother."

"Go back to your cell, my daughter!" said the Mother imperiously.

The General slipped aside behind the curtain lest the dreadful tumult within him should appear in his face; even in the shadow it seemed to him that he could still see the Superior's piercing eyes. He was afraid of her; she held his little, frail, hardly-won happiness in her hands; and he, who had never quailed under a triple row of guns, now trembled before this nun. The Duchess went towards the door, but she turned back.

"Mother," she said, with dreadful calmness, "the Frenchman is one of my brothers."

"Then stay, my daughter," said the Superior, after a pause.

The piece of admirable Jesuitry told of such love and regret, that a man less strongly constituted might have broken down under the keen delight in the midst of a great and, for him, an entirely novel peril. Oh! how precious words, looks, and gestures became when love must baffle lynx eyes and tiger's claws! Sister Theresa came back.

"You see, my brother, what I have dared to do only to speak to you for a moment of your salvation and of the prayers that my soul puts up for your soul daily. I am committing mortal sin. I have told a lie. How many days of penance must expiate that lie! But I shall endure it for your sake. My brother, you do not know what happiness it is to love in heaven; to feel that you can confess love purified by religion, love transported into the highest heights of all, so that we are permitted to lose sight of all but the soul. If the doctrine and the spirit of the Saint to whom we owe this refuge had not raised me above earth's anguish, and caught me up and set me, far indeed beneath the Sphere wherein she dwells, yet truly above this world, I should not have seen you again. But now I can see you, and hear your voice, and remain calm——"

The General broke in, "But, Antoinette, let me see you, you whom I love passionately, desperately, as you could have wished me to love you."

"Do not call me Antoinette, I implore you. Memories of the past hurt me. You must see no one here but Sister Theresa, a creature who trusts in the Divine mercy." She paused for a little, and then added, "You must control yourself, my brother. Our Mother would separate us without pity if there is any worldly passion in your face, or if you allow the tears to fall from your eyes."

The General bowed his head to regain self-control; when he looked up again he saw her face beyond the grating—the thin, white, but still impassioned face of the nun. All the magic charm of youth that once bloomed there, all the fair contrast of velvet whiteness and the color of the Bengal rose, had given place to a burning glow, as of a porcelain jar with a faint light shining through it. The wonderful hair in which she took such pride had been shaven; there was a band-

ness that knows no bounds, for what is it?—nothing compared with the infinite longings of my love. If your remorse long ago was sincere, you ought not to hesitate to follow me to-day."

"You forget that I am not free."

"The Duke is dead," he answered quickly.

Sister Theresa flushed red.

"May heaven be open to him!" she cried with a quick rush of feeling. "He was generous to me.—But I did not mean such ties; it was one of my sins that I was ready to break them all without scruple—for you."

"Are you speaking of your vows?" the General asked, frowning. "I did not think that anything weighed heavier with your heart than love. But do not think twice of it, Antoinette; the Holy Father himself shall absolve you of your oath. I will surely go to Rome, I will entreat all the powers of earth; if God could come down from heaven, I would——"

"Do not blaspheme."

"So do not fear the anger of God. Ah! I would far rather hear that you would leave your prison for me; that this very night you would let yourself down into a boat at the foot of the cliffs. And we would go away to be happy somewhere at the world's end, I know not where. And with me at your side, you should come back to life and health under the wings of love."

"You must not talk like this," said Sister Theresa; "you do not know what you are to me now. I love you far better than I ever loved you before. Every day I pray for you; I see you with other eyes. Armand, if you but knew the happiness of giving yourself up, without shame, to a pure friendship which God watches over! You do not know what joy it is to me to pray for heaven's blessing on you. I never pray for myself: God will do with me according to His will; but, at the price of my soul, I wish I could be sure that you are happy here on earth, and that you will he happy hereafter throughout all ages. My eternal life is all that trouble has left me to

offer up to you now. I am old now with weeping; I am neither young nor fair; and in any case, you could not respect the nun who became a wife; no love, not even motherhood, could give me absolution. . . . What can you say to outweigh the uncounted thoughts that have gathered in my heart during the past five years, thoughts that have changed, and worn, and blighted it? I ought to have given a heart less sorrowful to God."

"What can I say? Dear Antoinette, I will say this, that I love you; that affection, love, a great love, the joy of living in another heart that is ours, utterly and wholly ours, is so rare a thing and so hard to find, that I doubted you, and put you to sharp proof; but now, to-day, I love you, Antoinette, with all my soul's strength. . . . If you will follow me into solitude, I will hear no voice but yours, I will see no other face."

"Hush, Armand! You are shortening the little time that we may be together here on earth."

"Mother!" Sister Theresa called aloud in Spanish, "I have lied to you; this man is my lover!"

The curtain fell at once. The General, in his stupor, scarcely heard the doors within as they clanged.

"Ah! she loves me still!" he cried, understanding all the sublimity of that cry of hers. "She loves me still. She must be carried off. . . ."

The General left the island, returned to headquarters, pleaded ill-health, asked for leave of absence, and forthwith took his departure for France.

And now for the incidents which brought the two personages in this Scene into their present relation to each other.

The thing known in France as the Faubourg Saint-Germain is neither a Quarter, nor a sect, nor an institution, nor anything else that admits of a precise definition. There are great houses in the Place Royale, the Faubourg Saint-Honoré, and the Chaussée d'Antin, in any one of which you may breathe the same atmosphere of Faubourg Saint-Germain. So, to begin with, the whole Faubourg is not within the Faubourg. There are men and women born far enough away from its influences who respond to them and take their place in the circle; and again there are others, born within its limits, who may yet be driven forth for ever. For the last forty years the manners, and customs, and speech, in a word, the tradition of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, has been to Paris what the Court used to be in other times; it is what the Hôtel Saint-Paul was to the Fourteenth Century; the Louvre to the Fifteenth; the Palais, the Hôtel Rambouillet, and the Place Royale to the Sixteenth; and lastly, as Versailles was to the Seventeenth and the Eighteenth.

Just as the ordinary work-a-day Paris will always centre about some point; so, through all periods of history, the Paris of the nobles and the upper classes converges towards some particular spot. It is a periodically recurrent phenomenon which presents ample matter for reflection to those who are

fain to observe or describe the various social zones; and possibly an inquiry into the causes that bring about this centralization may do more than merely justify the probability of this episode; it may be of service to serious interests which some day will be more deeply rooted in the commonwealth, unless, indeed, experience is as meaningless for political parties as it is for youth.

In every age the great nobles, and the rich who always ape the great nobles, build their houses as far as possible from crowded streets. When the Duc d'Uzés built his splendid hôtel in the Rue Montmartre in the reign of Louis XIV., and set the fountain at his gates—for which beneficent action, to say nothing of his other virtues, he was held in such veneration that the whole quarter turned out in a body to follow his funeral—when the Duke, I say, chose this site for his house, he did so because that part of Paris was almost deserted in those days. But when the fortifications were pulled down, and the market gardens beyond the line of the boule-

Nothing contemptuous is intended by this statement. An aristocracy is in a manner the intellect of the social system, as the middle classes and the proletariat may be said to be its organizing and working power. It naturally follows that these forces are differently situated; and of their antagonism there is bred a seeming antipathy produced by the performance of different functions, all of them, however, existing for one common end.

Such social dissonances are so inevitably the outcome of any charter of the constitution, that however much a Liberal may be disposed to complain of them, as of treason against those sublime ideas with which the ambitious plebeian is apt to cover his designs, he would none the less think it a preposterous notion that M. le Prince de Montmorency, for instance, should continue to live in the Rue Saint-Martin at the corner of the street which bears that nobleman's name; or that M. le Duc de Fitz-James, descendant of the royal house of Scotland, should have his hôtel at the angle of the Rue Marie Stuart and the Rue Montorgueil. *Sint ut sunt, aut non sint,* the grand words of the Jesuit, might be taken as a motto by the great of all countries. These social differences are patent in all ages; the fact is always accepted by the people; its "reasons of state" are self-evident; it is at once cause and effect, a principle and a law. The common sense of the masses never deserts them until demagogues stir them up to gain ends of their own; that common sense is based on the verities of social order; and the social order is the same everywhere, in Moscow as in London, in Geneva as in Calcutta. Given a certain number of families of unequal fortune in any given space, you will see an aristocracy forming under your eyes; there will be the patricians, the upper classes, and yet other ranks below them. Equality may be a *right*, but no power on earth can convert it into *fact*. It would be a good thing for France if this idea could be popularized. The benefits of political harmony are obvious to the least intelligent classes. Harmony is, as it were, the poetry of order, and order is a matter of vital importance

to the working population. And what is order, reduced to its simplest expression, but the agreement of things among themselves—unity, in short? Architecture, music, and poetry, everything in France, and in France more than in any other country, is based upon this principle; it is written upon the very foundations of her clear accurate language, and a language must always be the most infallible index of national character. In the same way you may note that the French popular airs are those most calculated to strike the imagination, the best-modulated melodies are taken over by the people; clearness of thought, the intellectual simplicity of an idea attracts them; they like the incisive sayings that hold the greatest number of ideas. France is the one country in the world where a little phrase may bring about a great revolution. Whenever the masses have risen, it has been to bring men, affairs, and principles into agreement. No nation has a clearer conception of that idea of unity which should permeate the life of an aristocracy; possibly no other nation

This distinction between the upper and lower spheres of social activity, emphasized by differences in their manner of living, necessarily implies that in the highest aristocracy there is real worth and some distinguishing merit. In any State, no matter what form of "government" is affected, so soon as the patrician class fails to maintain that complete superiority which is the condition of its existence, it ceases to be a force, and is pulled down at once by the populace. The people always wish to see money, power, and initiative in their leaders' hands, hearts, and heads; they must be the spokesmen, they must represent the intelligence and the glory of the nation. Nations, like women, love strength in those who rule them; they cannot give love without respect; they refuse utterly to obey those of whom they do not stand in awe. An aristocracy fallen into contempt is a *roi fainéant*, a husband in petticoats; first it ceases to be itself, and then it ceases to be.

And in this way the isolation of the great, the sharply marked distinction in their manner of life, or in a word, the general custom of the patrician caste is at once the sign of a real power, and their destruction so soon as that power is lost. The Faubourg Saint-Germain failed to recognize the conditions of its being, while it would still have been easy to perpetuate its existence, and therefore was brought low for a time. The Faubourg should have looked the facts fairly in the face, as the English aristocracy did before them; they should have seen that every institution has its climacteric periods, when words lose their old meanings, and ideas reappear in a new guise, and the whole conditions of politics wear a changed aspect, while the underlying realities undergo no essential alteration.

These ideas demand further developments which form an essential part of this episode; they are given here both as a succinct statement of the causes, and an explanation of the things which happen in the course of the story.

The stateliness of the castles and palaces where nobles dwell; the luxury of the details; the constantly maintained

sumptuousness of the furniture; the "atmosphere" in which the fortunate owner of landed estates (a rich man before he was born) lives and moves easily and without friction; the habit of mind which never descends to calculate the petty work-a-day gains of existence; the leisure; the higher education attainable at a much earlier age; and lastly, the aristocratic condition that makes of him a social force, for which his opponents, by dint of study and a strong will and tenacity of vocation, are scarcely a match—all these things should contribute to form a lofty spirit in a man, possessed of such privileges from his youth up; they should stamp his character with that high self-respect, of which the least consequence is a nobleness of heart in harmony with the noble name that he bears. And in some few families all this is realized. There are noble characters here and there in the Faubourg, but they are marked exceptions to a general rule of egoism which has been the ruin of this world within a world. The privileges above enumerated are the birthright of the French noblesse.

childs, the Fuggers of the nineteenth century, are princes *de facto*. A great artist is in reality an oligarch; he represents a whole century, and almost always he is a law to others. And the art of words, the high pressure machinery of the writer, the poet's genius, the merchant's steady endurance, the strong will of the statesman who concentrates a thousand dazzling qualities in himself, the general's sword,—all these victories, in short, which a single individual will win, that he may tower above the rest of the world, the patrician class is now bound to win and keep exclusively. They must head the new forces as they once headed the material forces; how should they keep the position unless they are worthy of it? How, unless they are the soul and brain of a nation, shall they set its hands moving? How lead a people without the power of command? And what is the marshal's bâton without the innate power of the captain in the man who wields it? The Faubourg Saint-Germain took to playing with bâtons, and fancied that all the power was in its hands. It inverted the terms of the proposition which called it into existence. And instead of flinging away the insignia which offended the people, and quietly grasping the power, it allowed the bourgeoisie to seize the authority, clung with fatal obstinacy to its shadow, and over and over again forgot the laws which a minority must observe if it would live. When an aristocracy is scarce a thousandth part of the body social, it is bound to-day, as of old, to multiply its points of action, so as to counterbalance the weight of the masses in a great crisis. And in our days those means of action must be living forces, and not historical memories.

In France, unluckily, the noblesse were still so puffed up with the notion of their vanished power, that it was difficult to contend against a kind of innate presumption in themselves. Perhaps this is a national defect. The Frenchman is less given than any one else to undervalue himself; it comes natural to him to go from his degree to the one above it; and while it is a rare thing for him to pity the unfortunates over whose heads he rises, he always groans in spirit to see so many

fortunate people above him. He is very far from heartless, but too often he prefers to listen to his intellect. The national instinct which brings the Frenchman to the front, the vanity that wastes his substance, is as much a dominant passion as thrift in the Dutch. For three centuries it swayed the noblesse, who, in this respect, were certainly pre-eminently French. The scion of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, beholding his material superiority, was fully persuaded of his intellectual superiority. And everything contributed to confirm him in his belief; for ever since the Faubourg Saint-Germain existed at all—which is to say, ever since Versailles ceased to be the royal residence—the Faubourg, with some few gaps in continuity, was always backed up by the central power, which in France seldom fails to support that side. Thence its downfall in 1830.

At that time the party of the Faubourg Saint-Germain was rather like an army without a base of operation. It had utterly failed to take advantage of the peace to plant itself in

gain in strength. And herein lay their mistake. Money, likewise, is only the outward and visible sign of power. All these families were made up of persons who preserved a high tradition of courtesy, of true graciousness of life, of refined speech, with a family pride, and a squeamish sense of *noblesse oblige* which suited well with the kind of life they led; a life wholly filled with occupations which become contemptible so soon as they cease to be accessories and take the chief place in existence. There was a certain intrinsic merit in all these people, but the merit was on the surface, and none of them were worth their face-value.

Not a single one among those families had courage to ask itself the question, "Are we strong enough for the responsibility of power?" They were cast on the top, like the lawyers of 1830; and instead of taking the patron's place, like a great man, the Faubourg Saint-Germain showed itself greedy as an upstart. The most intelligent nation in the world perceived clearly that the restored nobles were organizing everything for their own particular benefit. From that day the noblesse was doomed. The Faubourg Saint-Germain tried to be an aristocracy when it could only be an oligarchy—two very different systems, as any man may see for himself if he gives an intelligent perusal to the list of the patronymics of the House of Peers.

The King's Government certainly meant well; but the maxim that the people must be made to *will* everything, even their own welfare, was pretty constantly forgotten, nor did they bear in mind that La France is a woman and capricious, and must be happy or chastised at her own good pleasure. If there had been any dukes like the Duc de Laval, whose modesty made him worthy of the name he bore, the elder branch would have been as securely seated on the throne as the House of Hanover at this day.

In 1814 the noblesse of France were called upon to assert their superiority over the most aristocratic bourgeoisie in the most feminine of all countries, to take the lead in the most highly educated epoch the world had yet seen. And this was

for [illegible] notably the case in 1820. The Faubourg Saint-bu[illegible] might very easily have led and amused the middle cl[illegible] days when people's heads were turned with distinc-th[illegible] and art and science were all the rage. But the narrow-p[illegible] leaders of a time of great intellectual progress, all of [illegible] art and science. They had not even the wit to [illegible] religion in attractive colors, though they needed its [illegible] While Lamartine, Lamennais, Montalembert, and [illegible] were putting new life and elevation into men's [illegible] of religion, and gilding it with poetry, these bunglers [illegible] Government chose to make the harshness of their creed [illegible] over the country. Never was nation in a more tract-[illegible] humor; La France, like a tired woman, was ready to [illegible] to anything; never was mismanagement so clumsy; [illegible] La France, like a woman, would have forgiven wrongs [illegible] easily than bungling.

If the noblesse meant to reinstate themselves, the better to found a strong oligarchy, they should have honestly and

Etiquette, not an institution of primary necessity, might have been maintained if it had appeared only on state occasions, but as it was, there was a daily wrangle over precedence; it ceased to be a matter of art or court ceremonial, it became a question of power. And if from the outset the Crown lacked an adviser equal to so great a crisis, the aristocracy was still more lacking in a sense of its wider interests, an instinct which might have supplied the deficiency. They stood nice about M. de Talleyrand's marriage, when M. de Talleyrand was the one man among them with the steel-encompassed brains that can forge a new political system and begin a new career of glory for a nation. The Faubourg scoffed at a minister if he was not gently born, and produced no one of gentle birth that was fit to be a minister. There were plenty of nobles fitted to serve their country by raising the dignity of justices of the peace, by improving the land, by opening out roads and canals, and taking an active and leading part as country gentlemen; but these had sold their estates to gamble on the Stock Exchange. Again the Faubourg might have absorbed the energetic men among the bourgeoisie, and opened their ranks to the ambition which was undermining authority; they preferred instead to fight, and to fight unarmed, for of all that they once possessed there was nothing left but tradition. For their misfortune there was just precisely enough of their former wealth left them as a class to keep up their bitter pride. They were content with their past. Not one of them seriously thought of bidding the son of the house take up arms from the pile of weapons which the Nineteenth Century flings down in the market-place. Young men, shut out from office, were dancing at Madame's balls, while they should have been doing the work done under the Republic and the Empire by young, conscientious, harmlessly employed energies. It was their place to carry out at Paris the programme which their seniors should have been following in the country. The heads of houses might have won back recognition of their titles by unremitting attention to local interests, by falling in with the

spirit of the age, by recasting their order to suit the taste of the times.

But, pent up together in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, where the spirit of the ancient court and traditions of bygone feuds between the nobles and the Crown still lingered on, the aristocracy was not whole-hearted in its allegiance to the Tuileries, and so much the more easily defeated because it was concentrated in the Chamber of Peers, and badly organized even there. If the noblesse had woven themselves into a network over the country, they could have held their own; but cooped up in their Faubourg, with their backs against the Château, or spread at full length over the Budget, a single blow cut the thread of a fast-expiring life, and a petty, smug-faced lawyer came forward with the axe. In spite of M. Royer-Collard's admirable discourse, the hereditary peerage and law of entail fell before the lampoons of a man who made it a boast that he had adroitly argued some few heads out of the executioner's clutches, and now forsooth

of purer descent than the nobles of the Court which alienated them from itself,—all these things combined to bring about a most discordant state of things in the Faubourg Saint-Germain. It was neither compact in its organization, nor consequent in its action; neither completely moral, nor frankly dissolute; it did not corrupt, nor was it corrupted; it would neither wholly abandon the disputed points which damaged its cause, nor yet adopt the policy that might have saved it. In short, however effete individuals might be, the party as a whole was none the less armed with all the great principles which lie at the roots of national existence. What was there in the Faubourg that it should perish in its strength?

It was very hard to please in the choice of candidates; the Faubourg had good taste, it was scornfully fastidious, yet there was nothing very glorious nor chivalrous truly about its fall.

In the Emigration of 1789 there were some traces of a loftier feeling; but in the Emigration of 1830 from Paris into the country there was nothing discernible but self-interest. A few famous men of letters, a few oratorical triumphs in the Chambers, M. de Talleyrand's attitude in the Congress, the taking of Algiers, and not a few names that found their way from the battlefield into the pages of history, —all these things were so many examples set before the French noblesse to show that it was still open to them to take their part in the national existence, and to win recognition of their claims, if, indeed, they could condescend thus far. In every living organism the work of bringing the whole into harmony within itself was going on. If a man is indolent, the indolence shows itself in everything that he does; and, in the same manner, the general spirit of a class is pretty plainly manifested in the face it turns on the world, and the soul informs the body.

The women of the Restoration displayed neither the proud disregard of public opinion shown by the court ladies of olden time in their wantonness, nor yet the simple grandeur of the tardy virtues by which they expiated their sins and shed so

bright a glory about their names. There was nothing either very frivolous or very serious about the woman of the Restoration. She was hypocritical as a rule in her passion, and compounded, so to speak, with its pleasures. Some few families led the domestic life of the Duchesse d'Orléans, whose connubial couch was exhibited so absurdly to visitors at the Palais Royal. Two or three kept up the traditions of the Regency, filling cleverer women with something like disgust. The great lady of the new school exercised no influence at all over the manners of the time; and yet she might have done much. She might, at worst, have presented as dignified a spectacle as Englishwomen of the same rank. But she hesitated feebly among old precedents, became a bigot by force of circumstances, and allowed nothing of herself to appear, not even her better qualities.

Not one among the Frenchwomen of that day had the ability to create a salon whither leaders of fashion might come to take lessons in taste and elegance. Their voices, which once

terrific popular explosions, coolly judging the passion and ferment without which the great struggles of the world could not be carried on at all. And if this is true of the Historical Comedy of the Centuries, it is equally true in a more restricted sphere in the detached scenes of the national drama known as the *Manners of the Age.*

At the beginning of that ephemeral life led by the Faubourg Saint-Germain under the Restoration, to which, if there is any truth in the above reflections, they failed to give stability, the most perfect type of the aristocratic caste in its weakness and strength, its greatness and littleness, might have been found for a brief space in a young married woman who belonged to it. This was a woman artificially educated, but in reality ignorant; a woman whose instincts and feelings were lofty, while the thought which should have controlled them was wanting. She squandered the wealth of her nature in obedience to social conventions; she was ready to brave society, yet she hesitated till her scruples degenerated into artifice. With more wilfulness than real force of character, impressionable rather than enthusiastic, gifted with more brain than heart; she was supremely a woman, supremely a coquette, and above all things a Parisienne, loving a brilliant life and gaiety, reflecting never, or too late; imprudent to the verge of poetry, and humble in the depths of her heart, in spite of her charming insolence. Like some straight-growing reed, she made a show of independence; yet, like the reed, she was ready to bend to a strong hand. She talked much of religion, and had it not at heart, though she was prepared to find in it a solution of her life. How explain a creature so complex? Capable of heroism, yet sinking unconsciously from heroic heights to utter a spiteful word; young and sweet-natured, not so much old at heart as aged by the maxims of those about her; versed in a selfish philosophy in which she was all unpractised, she had all the vices of a courtier, all the nobleness of developing womanhood. She trusted nothing and no one, yet there were times when she quitted her sceptical attitude for a submissive credulity.

How should any portrait be anything but incomplete of her, in which the play of swiftly-changing color made discord only to produce a poetic confusion? for in her there shone a divine brightness, a radiance of youth that blended all her bewildering characteristics in a certain completeness and unity informed by her charm. Nothing was feigned. The passion or non-passion, the ineffectual high aspirations, the actual pettiness, the coolness of sentiment and warmth of impulse, were all spontaneous and unaffected and as much the outcome of her own position as of the position of the aristocracy to which she belonged. She was wholly self-constrained; she put herself proudly above the world and beneath the shelter of her name. There was something of the egoism of Medea in her life, as in the life of the aristocracy that lay a-dying, and would not so much as raise itself or stretch out a hand to any political physician; so well aware of its feebleness, or so conscious that it was already dust, that it refused to touch or be touched.

The Ducs de Navarreins and de Langeais had been faithful throughout to the exiled Princes, nobly resisting all the temptations of glory under the Empire. Under the circumstances they naturally followed out the old family policy; and Mlle. Antoinette, a beautiful and portionless girl, was married to M. le Marquis de Langeais only a few months before the death of the Duke his father.

After the return of the Bourbons, the families resumed their rank, offices, and dignity at Court; once more they entered public life, from which hitherto they held aloof, and took their place high on the sun-lit summits of the new political world. In that time of general baseness and sham political conversions, the public conscience was glad to recognise the unstained loyalty of the two houses, and a consistency in political and private life for which all parties involuntarily respected them. But, unfortunately, as so often happens in a time of transition, the most disinterested persons, the men whose loftiness of view and wise principles would have gained the confidence of the French nation and led them to believe in the generosity of a novel and spirited policy;—these men, to repeat, were taken out of affairs, and public business was allowed to fall into the hands of others, who found it to their interest to push principles to their extreme consequences by way of proving their devotion.

The families of Langeais and Navarreins remained about the Court, condemned to perform the duties required by Court ceremonial amid the reproaches and sneers of the Liberal party. They were accused of gorging themselves with riches and honors, and all the while their family estates were no larger than before, and liberal allowances from the civil list were wholly expended in keeping up the state necessary for any European Government, even if it be a Republic.

In 1818, M. le Duc de Langeais commanded a division of the army, and the Duchess held a post about one of the Princesses, in virtue of which she was free to live in Paris and apart from her husband without scandal. The Duke, moreover, besides his military duties, had a place at Court,

to which he came during his term of waiting, leaving his major-general in command. The Duke and Duchess were leading lives entirely apart, the world none the wiser. Their marriage of convention shared the fate of nearly all family arrangements of the kind. Two more antipathetic dispositions could not well have been found; they were brought together; they jarred upon each other; there was soreness on either side; then they were divided once for all. Then they went their separate ways, with a due regard for appearances. The Duc de Langeais, by nature as methodical as the Chevalier de Folard himself, gave himself up methodically to his own tastes and amusements, and left his wife at liberty to do as she pleased so soon as he felt sure of her character. He recognized in her a spirit pre-eminently proud, a cold heart, a profound submissiveness to the usages of the world, and a youthful loyalty. Under the eyes of great relations, with the light of a prudish and bigoted Court turned full upon the Duchess, his honor was safe.

reasons of her own, or from vanity, never appeared in public without a following of women equally distinguished by name and fortune. As queen of fashion she had her *dames d'atours,* her ladies, who modeled their manner and their wit on hers. They had been cleverly chosen. None of her satellites belonged to the inmost Court circle, nor to the highest level of the Faubourg Saint-Germain; but they had set their minds upon admission to those inner sanctuaries. Being as yet simple denominations, they wished to rise to the neighborhood of the throne, and mingle with the seraphic powers in the high sphere known as *le petit château.* Thus surrounded, the Duchess' position was stronger and more commanding and secure. Her "ladies" defended her character and helped her to play her detestable part of a woman of fashion. She could laugh at men at her ease, play with fire, receive the homage on which the feminine nature is nourished, and remain mistress of herself.

At Paris, in the highest society of all, a woman is a woman still; she lives on incense, adulation, and honors. No beauty, however undoubted, no face, however fair, is anything without admiration. Flattery and a lover are proofs of power. And what is power without recognition? Nothing. If the prettiest of women were left alone in a corner of a drawing-room, she would droop. Put her in the very centre and summit of social grandeur, she will at once aspire to reign over all hearts—often because it is out of her power to be the happy queen of one. Dress and manner and coquetry are all meant to please one of the poorest creatures extant—the brainless coxcomb, whose handsome face is his sole merit; it was for such as these that women threw themselves away. The gilded wooden idols of the Restoration, for they were neither more nor less, had neither the antecedents of the *petits maîtres* of the time of the Fronde, nor the rough sterling worth of Napoleon's heroes, nor the wit and fine manners of their grandsires; but something of all three they meant to be without any trouble to themselves. Brave they were, like all young Frenchmen; ability they possessed, no doubt, if they had had

a chance of proving it, but their places were filled up by the old worn-out men, who kept them in leading strings. It was a day of small things, a cold prosaic era. Perhaps it takes a long time for a Restoration to become a Monarchy.

For the past eighteen months the Duchesse de Langeais had been leading this empty life, filled with balls and subsequent visits, objectless triumphs, and the transient loves that spring up and die in an evening's space. All eyes were turned on her when she entered a room; she reaped her harvest of flatteries and some few words of warmer admiration, which she encouraged by a gesture or a glance, but never suffered to penetrate deeper than the skin. Her tone and bearing and everything else about her imposed her will upon others. Her life was a sort of fever of vanity and perpetual enjoyment, which turned her head. She was daring enough in conversation; she would listen to anything, corrupting the surface, as it were, of her heart. Yet when she returned home, she often blushed at the story that had made her laugh;

the Duchess had her court, and the number of her
's and courtiers guaranteed her virtue. She was amiable
ıscinating; she flirted till the ball or the evening's gaiety
t an end. Then the curtain dropped. She was cold,
ɜrent, self-contained again, till the next day brought its
ed sensations, superficial as before. Two or three men
completely deceived, and fell in love in earnest. She
ed at them, she was utterly insensible. "I am loved!"
ld herself. "He loves me!" The certainty sufficed her.
nough for the miser to know that his every whim might
filled if he chose; so it was with the Duchess, and per-
ıhe did not even go as far as to form a wish.
: evening she chanced to be at the house of an intimate
l, Mme. la Vicomtesse de Fontaine, one of the humble
who cordially detested her, and went with her every-
. In a "friendship" of this sort both sides are on their
, and never lay their armor aside; confidences are in-
ısly indiscreet, and not unfrequently treacherous. Mme.
ngeais had distributed her little patronizing, friendly,
ezing bows, with the air natural to a woman who knows
orth of her smiles, when her eyes fell upon a total
ger. Something in the man's large gravity of aspect
ed her, and, with a feeling almost like dread, she turned
me. de Maufrigneuse with, "Who is the newcomer,
"

ıme one that you have heard of, no doubt. The Mar-
le Montriveau."
ı! is it he?"
· took up her eyeglass and submitted him to a very in-
scrutiny, as if he had been a picture meant to re-
glances, not to return them.
ɔ introduce him; he ought to be interesting."
ɔbody more tiresome and dull, dear. But he is the
ın."
Armand de Montriveau, at that moment all unwittingly
ɔject of general curiosity, better deserved attention than
f the idols that Paris needs must set up to worship for

a brief space, for the city is vexed by periodical fits of craving, a passion for *engouement* and sham enthusiasm, which must be satisfied. The Marquis was the only son of General de Montriveau, one of the *ci-devants* who served the Republic nobly, and fell by Joubert's side at Novi. Bonaparte had placed his son at the school at Châlons, with the orphans of other generals who fell on the battlefield, leaving their children under the protection of the Republic. Armand de Montriveau left school with his way to make, entered the artillery, and had only reached a major's rank at the time of the Fontainebleau disaster. In this section of the service the chances of advancement were not many. There are fewer officers, in the first place, among the gunners than in any other corps; and in the second place, the feeling in the artillery was decidedly Liberal, not to say Republican; and the Emperor, feeling little confidence in a body of highly educated men who were apt to think for themselves, gave promotion grudgingly in the service. In the artillery, ac-

casion to avoid bullets. He was kindly; but his expression was haughty and stern, and his face gained him this character. In everything he was rigorous as arithmetic; he never permitted the slightest deviation from duty on any plausible pretext, nor blinked the consequences of a fact. He would lend himself to nothing of which he was ashamed; he never asked anything for himself; in short, Armand de Montriveau was one of many great men unknown to fame, and philosophical enough to despise it; living without attaching themselves to life, because they have not found their opportunity of developing to the full their power to do and feel.

People were afraid of Montriveau; they respected him, but he was not very popular. Men may indeed allow you to rise above them, but to decline to descend as low as they can do is the one unpardonable sin. In their feeling towards loftier natures, there is a trace of hate and fear. Too much honor with them implies censure of themselves, a thing forgiven neither to the living nor to the dead.

After the Emperor's farewells at Fontainebleau, Montriveau, noble though he was, was put on half-pay. Perhaps the heads of the War Office took fright at uncompromising uprightness worthy of antiquity, or perhaps it was known that he felt bound by his oath to the Imperial Eagle. During the Hundred Days he was made a Colonel of the Guard, and left on the field of Waterloo. His wounds kept him in Belgium; he was not present at the disbanding of the Army of the Loire, but the King's government declined to recognize promotion made during the Hundred Days, and Armand de Montriveau left France.

An adventurous spirit, a loftiness of thought hitherto satisfied by the hazards of war, drove him on an exploring expedition through Upper Egypt: his sanity of impulse directed his enthusiasm to a project of great importance, he turned his attention to that unexplored Central Africa which occupies the learned of to-day. The scientific expedition was long and unfortunate. He had made a valuable collection of notes bearing on various geographical and commercial problems,

of which solutions are still eagerly sought; and succeeded, after surmounting many difficulties, in reaching the heart of the continent, when he was betrayed into the hands of a hostile native tribe. Then, stripped of all that he had, for two years he led a wandering life in the desert, the slave of savages, threatened with death at every moment, and more cruelly treated than a dumb animal in the power of pitiless children. Physical strength, and a mind braced by endurance, enabled him to survive the horrors of that captivity; but his miraculous escape well-nigh exhausted his energies. When he reached the French colony at Senegal, a half-dead fugitive covered with rags, his memories of his former life were dim and shapeless. The great sacrifices made in his travels were all forgotten like his studies of African dialects, his discoveries, and observations. One story will give an idea of all that he passed through. Once for several days the children of the sheikh of the tribe amused themselves by putting him up for a mark and flinging horses' knuckle-bones at his

ing's government, trying to attach capable men to it-
l to strengthen the army, made concessions about that
Napoleon's old officers if their known loyalty and
er offered guarantees of fidelity. M. de Montriveau's
nce more appeared in the army list with the rank of
; he received his arrears of pay and passed into the
. All these favors, one after another, came to seek
rquis de Montriveau; he had asked for nothing however
Friends had taken the steps for him which he would
fused to take for himself.

r this, his habits were modified all at once; contrary
ustom, he went into society. He was well received,
ere he met with great deference and respect. He
to have found some end in life; but everything passed
the man; there was no external signs; in society he was
old, and wore a grave, reserved face. His social suc-
s great, precisely because he stood out in such strong
t to the conventional faces which line the walls of
alons. He was, indeed, something quite new there.
f speech, like a hermit or a savage, his shyness was
to be haughtiness, and people were greatly taken with
was something strange and great. Women generally
much the more smitten with this original person
he was not to be caught by their flatteries, however
nor by the wiles with which they circumvent the
st men and corrode the steel temper. Their Parisian
s were lost on M. de Montriveau; his nature only re-
l to the sonorous vibration of lofty thought and feel-
nd he would very promptly have been dropped but
romance that hung about his adventures and his life;
the men who cried him up behind his back; but for
n who looked for a triumph for her vanity, the wo-
o was to fill his thoughts.

hese reasons the Duchesse de Langeais' curiosity was
ively than natural. Chance had so ordered it that her
in the man before her had been aroused only the
ore, when she heard the story of one of M. de Mont-

riveau's adventures, a story calculated to make the strongest impression upon a woman's ever-changing fancy.

During M. de Montriveau's voyage of discovery to the sources of the Nile, he had had an argument with one of his guides, surely the most extraordinary debate in the annals of travel. The district that he wished to explore could only be reached on foot across a tract of desert. Only one of his guides knew the way; no traveler had penetrated before into that part of the country, where the undaunted officer hoped to find a solution of several scientific problems. In spite of the representations made to him by the guide and the older men of the place, he started upon the formidable journey. Summoning up courage, already highly strung by the prospect of dreadful difficulties, he set out in the morning.

The loose sand shifted under his feet at every step; and when, at the end of a long day's march, he lay down to sleep on the ground, he had never been so tired in his life. He knew, however, that he must be up and on his way before

"Sound yourself; if you have not courage enough, here is my dagger"

TO NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

while stood motionless, listening to these complaints with an ironical expression, studying the while, with the apparent indifference of an Oriental, the scarcely perceptible indications in the lie of the sands, which looked almost black, like burnished gold.

"I have made a mistake," he remarked coolly. "I could not make out the track, it is so long since I came this way; we are surely on it now, but we must push on for two hours."

"The man is right," thought M. de Montriveau.

So he went on again, struggling to follow the pitiless native. It seemed as if he were bound to his guide by some thread like the invisible tie between the condemned man and the headsman. But the two hours went by, Montriveau had spent his last drops of energy, and the sky-line was a blank, there were no palm-trees, no hills. He could neither cry out nor groan, he lay down on the sand to die, but his eyes would have frightened the boldest; something in his face seemed to say that he would not die alone. His guide, like a very fiend, gave him back a cool glance like a man that knows his power, left him to lie there, and kept at a safe distance out of reach of his desperate victim. At last M. de Montriveau recovered strength enough for a last curse. The guide came nearer, silenced him with a steady look, and said, "Was it not your own will to go where I am taking you, in spite of us all? You say that I have lied to you. If I had not, you would not be even here. Do you want the truth? Here it is. *We have still another five hours' march before us, and we cannot go back.* Sound yourself; if you have not courage enough, here is my dagger."

Startled by this dreadful knowledge of pain and human strength, M. de Montriveau would not be behind a savage; he drew a fresh stock of courage from his pride as a European, rose to his feet, and followed his guide. The five hours were at an end, and still M. de Montriveau saw nothing, he turned his failing eyes upon his guide; but the Nubian hoisted him on his shoulders, and showed him a wide pool of water with greenness all about it, and a noble forest lighted up by

the sunset. It lay only a hundred paces away; a vast ledge of granite hid the glorious landscape. It seemed to Armand that he had taken a new lease of life. His guide, that giant in courage and intelligence, finished his work of devotion by carrying him across the hot, slippery, scarcely discernible track on the granite. Behind him lay the hell of burning sand, before him the earthly paradise of the most beautiful oasis in the desert.

The Duchess, struck from the first by the appearance of this romantic figure, was even more impressed when she learned that this was that Marquis de Montriveau of whom she had dreamed during the night. She had been with him among the hot desert sands, he had been the companion of her nightmare wanderings; for such a woman was not this a delightful presage of a new interest in her life? And never was a man's exterior a better exponent of his character; never were curious glances so well justified. The principal characteristic of his great, square-hewn head was the thick,

over in Armand de Montriveau during the brief interval before the Duchesse de Maufrigneuse brought him to be introduced. She would prefer him above the others; she would attach him to herself, display all her powers of coquetry for him. It was a fancy, such a merest Duchess' whim as furnished a Pope or a Calderon with the plot of the *Dog in the Manger*. She would not suffer another woman to engross him; but she had not the remotest intention of being his.

Nature had given the Duchess every qualification for the part of coquette, and education had perfected her. Women envied her, and men fell in love with her, not without reason. Nothing that can inspire love, justify it, and give it lasting empire was wanting in her. Her style of beauty, her manner, her voice, her bearing, all combined to give her that instinctive coquetry which seems to be the consciousness of power. Her shape was graceful; perhaps there was a trace of self-consciousness in her changes of movement, the one affectation that could be laid to her charge; but everything about her was a part of her personality, from her least little gesture to the peculiar turn of her phrases, the demure glance of her eyes. Her great lady's grace, her most striking characteristic, had not destroyed the very French quick mobility of her person. There was an extraordinary fascination in her swift, incessant changes of attitude. She seemed as if she surely would be a most delicious mistress when her corset and the encumbering costume of her part was laid aside. All the rapture of love surely was latent in the freedom of her expressive glances, in her caressing tones, in the charm of her words. She gave glimpses of the high-born courtesan within her, mainly protesting against the creeds of the duchess.

You might sit near her through an evening, she would be gay and melancholy in turn, and her gaiety, like her sadness, seemed spontaneous. She would be gracious, disdainful, insolent, or confiding at will. Her apparent good nature was real; she had no temptation to descend to malignity. But at each moment her mood changed; she was full of confidence or craft; her moving tenderness would give place to a heart-

breaking hardness and insensibility. Yet how paint her as she was, without bringing together all the extremes of feminine nature? In a word, the Duchess was anything that she wished to be or to seem. Her face was slightly too long. There was a grace in it, and a certain thinness and fineness that recalled the portraits of the Middle Ages. Her skin was white, with a faint rose tint. Everything about her erred, as it were, by an excess of delicacy.

M. de Montriveau willingly consented to be introduced to the Duchesse de Langeais; and she, after the manner of persons whose sensitive taste leads them to avoid banalities, refrained from overwhelming him with questions and compliments. She received him with a gracious deference which could not fail to flatter a man of more than ordinary powers, for the fact that a man rises above the ordinary level implies that he possesses something of that tact which makes women quick to read feeling. If the Duchess showed any curiosity, it was by her glances; her compliments were conveyed in her

the women, his friends congratulated him, half laugh-
half in earnest, on the extraordinary reception vouch-
him by the Duchesse de Langeais. The difficult and
nt conquest had been made beyond a doubt, and the
of it was reserved for the Artillery of the Guard. It is
imagine the jests, good and bad, when this topic had
een started; the world of Paris salons is so eager for
ment, and a joke lasts for such a short time, that every
eager to make the most of it while it is fresh.
unconsciously, the General felt flattered by this non-
From his place where he had taken his stand, his eyes
rawn again and again to the Duchess by countless wav-
eflections. He could not help admitting to himself that
the women whose beauty had captivated his eyes, not
d seemed to be a more exquisite embodiment of faults
ir qualities blended in a completeness that might realize
ams of earliest manhood. Is there a man in any rank
that has not felt indefinable rapture in his secret soul
e woman singled out (if only in his dreams) to be his
when she, in body, soul, and social aspects, satisfies his
requirement, a thrice perfect woman? And if this
old perfection that flatters his pride is no argument for
her, it is beyond cavil one of the great inducements to
ntiment. Love would soon be convalescent, as the
enth century moralist remarked, were it not for vanity.
t is certainly true that for every one, man or woman,
s a wealth of pleasure in the superiority of the beloved.
set so high by birth that a contemptuous glance can
wound her? is she wealthy enough to surround herself
state which falls nothing short of royalty of kings of
e during their short reign of splendor? is she so ready-
that a keen-edged jest never brings her into confusion?
ful enough to rival any woman?—Is it such a small
to know that your self-love will never suffer through
A man makes these reflections in the twinkling of an
And how if, in the future opened out by early ripened
n, he catches glimpses of the changeful delight of her

charm, the frank innocence of a maiden soul, the perils of love's voyage, the thousand folds of the veil of coquetry? Is not this enough to move the coldest man's heart?

This, therefore, was M. de Montriveau's position with regard to woman; his past life in some measure explaining the extraordinary fact. He had been thrown, when little more than a boy, into the hurricane of Napoleon's wars; his life had been spent on fields of battle. Of women he knew just so much as a traveler knows of a country when he travels across it in haste from one inn to another. The verdict which Voltaire passed upon his eighty years of life might, perhaps, have been applied by Montriveau to his own thirty-seven years of existence, had he not thirty-seven follies with which to reproach himself? At his age he was as much a novice in love as the lad that has just been furtively reading *Faublas*. Of women he had nothing to learn; of love he knew nothing; and thus, desires, quite unknown before, sprang from this virginity of feeling.

a vow is a kind of contract made with Destiny, a man's whole future is solemnly pledged to fulfil it, and everything, even his own death, is regarded simply as a means to the one end.

A younger man would have said to himself, "I should very much like to have the Duchess for my mistress!" or, "If the Duchesse de Langeais cared for a man, he would be a very lucky rascal!" But the General said, "I will have Mme. de Langeais for my mistress." And if a man takes such an idea into his head when his heart has never been touched before, and love begins to be a kind of religion with him, he little knows in what a hell he has set his foot.

Armand de Montriveau suddenly took flight and went home in the first hot fever-fit of the first love that he had known. When a man has kept all his boyish beliefs, illusions, frankness, and impetuosity into middle age, his first impulse is, as it were, to stretch out a hand to take the thing that he desires; a little later he realizes that there is a gulf set between them, and that it is all but impossible to cross it. A sort of childish impatience seizes him, he wants the thing the more, and trembles or cries. Wherefore, the next day, after the stormiest reflections that had yet perturbed his mind, Armand de Montriveau discovered that he was under the yoke of the senses, and his bondage made the heavier by his love.

The woman so cavalierly treated in his thoughts of yesterday had become a most sacred and dreadful power. She was to be his world, his life, from this time forth. The greatest joy, the keenest anguish, that he had yet known grew colorless before the bare recollection of the least sensation stirred in him by her. The swiftest revolutions in a man's outward life only touch his interests, while passion brings a complete revulsion of feeling. And so in those who live by feeling, rather than by self-interest, the doers rather than the reasoners, the sanguine rather than the lymphatic temperaments, love works a complete revolution. In a flash, with one single reflection, Armand de Montriveau wiped out his whole past life.

A score of times he asked himself, like a boy, "Shall I go,

or shall I not?" and then at last he dressed, came to the Hôtel de Langeais towards eight o'clock that evening, and was admitted. He was to see the woman—ah! not the woman—the girl that he had seen yesterday, among lights, a fresh innocent girl in gauze and silken lace and veiling. He burst in upon her to declare his love, as if it were a question of firing the first shot on a field of battle.

Poor novice! He found his ethereal sylphide shrouded in a brown cashmere dressing-gown ingeniously befrilled, lying languidly stretched out upon a sofa in a dimly lighted boudoir. Mme. de Langeais did not so much as rise, nothing was visible of her but her face, her hair was loose but confined by a scarf. A hand indicated a seat, a hand that seemed white as marble to Montriveau by the flickering light of a single candle at the further side of the room, and a voice as soft as the light said:

"If it had been any one else, M. le Marquis, a friend with whom I could dispense with ceremony, or a mere acquaint-

ently brought them to her lips. The Duchess meant to have the full benefit of her headache, and her speculation was fully successful. The General, poor man, was really distressed by the lady's simulated distress. Like Crillon listening to the story of the Crucifixion, he was ready to draw his sword against the vapors. How could a man dare to speak just then to this suffering woman of the love that she inspired? Armand had already felt that it would be absurd to fire off a declaration of love point-blank at one so far above other women. With a single thought came understanding of the delicacies of feeling, of the soul's requirements. To love: what was that but to know how to plead, to beg for alms, to wait? And as for the love that he felt, must he not prove it? His tongue was mute, it was frozen by the conventions of the noble Faubourg, the majesty of a sick headache, the bashfulness of love. But no power on earth could veil his glances; the heat and the Infinite of the Desert blazed in eyes, calm as a panther's, beneath the lids that fell so seldom. The Duchess enjoyed the steady gaze that enveloped her in light and warmth.

"Mme. la Duchesse," he answered, "I am afraid I express my gratitude for your goodness very badly. At this moment I have but one desire—I wish it were in my power to cure the pain."

"Permit me to throw this off, I feel too warm now," she said, gracefully tossing aside a cushion that covered her feet.

"Madame, in Asia your feet would be worth some ten thousand sequins."

"A traveler's compliment!" smiled she.

It pleased the sprightly lady to involve a rough soldier in a labyrinth of nonsense, commonplaces, and meaningless talk, in which he manœuvred, in military language, as Prince Charles might have done at close quarters with Napoleon. She took a mischievous amusement in reconnoitring the extent of his infatuation by the number of foolish speeches extracted from a novice whom she led step by step into a hopeless maze, meaning to leave him there in confusion. She began by laughing at him, but nevertheless it pleased her to make him forget how time went.

The length of a first visit is frequently a compliment, but Armand was innocent of any such intent. The famous explorer spent an hour in chat on all sorts of subjects, said nothing that he meant to say, and was feeling that he was only an instrument on whom this woman played, when she rose, sat upright, drew the scarf from her hair, and wrapped it about her throat, leaned her elbow on the cushions, did him the honor of a complete cure, and rang for lights. The most graceful movement succeeded to complete repose. She turned to M. de Montriveau, from whom she had just extracted a confidence which seemed to interest her deeply, and said:

"You wish to make game of me by trying to make me believe that you have never loved. It is a man's great pretension with us. And we always believe it! Out of pure politeness. Do we not know what to expect from it for ourselves? Where is the man that has found but a single opportunity of being his heart? But you love to deceive us, and we submit

kept in the same place by its mischievous tormentor. And yet it gave the Duchess inexpressible happiness to see that this strong man had told her the truth. Armand had never loved, as he had said. He was about to go, in a bad humor with himself, and still more out of humor with her; but it delighted her to see a sullenness that she could conjure away with a word, a glance, or a gesture.

"Will you come to-morrow evening?" she asked. "I am going to a ball, but I shall stay at home for you until ten o'clock.

Montriveau spent most of the next day in smoking an indeterminate quantity of cigars in his study window, and so got through the hours till he could dress and go to the Hôtel de Langeais. To any one who had known the magnificent worth of the man, it would have been grievous to see him grown so small, so distrustful of himself; the mind that might have shed light over undiscovered worlds shrunk to the proportions of a she-coxcomb's boudoir. Even he himself felt that he had fallen so low already in his happiness that to save his life he could not have told his love to one of his closest friends. Is there not always a trace of shame in the lover's bashfulness, and perhaps in woman a certain exultation over diminished masculine stature? Indeed, but for a host of motives of this kind, how explain why women are nearly always the first to betray the secret?—a secret of which, perhaps, they soon weary.

"Mme. la Duchesse cannot see visitors, monsieur," said the man; "she is dressing, she begs you to wait for her here."

Armand walked up and down the drawing-room, studying her taste in the least details. He admired Mme. de Langeais herself in the objects of her choosing; they revealed her life before he could grasp her personality and ideas. About an hour later the Duchess came noiselessly out of her chamber. Montriveau turned, saw her flit like a shadow across the room, and trembled. She came up to him, not with a bourgeoise's inquiry, "How do I look?" She was sure of herself; her steady eyes said plainly, "I am adorned to please you."

No one, surely, save the old fairy godmother of some princess in disguise, could have wound a cloud of gauze about the dainty throat, so that the dazzling satin skin beneath should gleam through the gleaming folds. The Duchess was dazzling. The pale blue color of her gown, repeated in the flowers in her hair, appeared by the richness of its hue to lend substance to a fragile form grown too wholly ethereal; for as she glided towards Armand, the loose ends of her scarf floated about her, putting that valiant warrior in mind of the bright damoiseil flies that hover now over water, now over the flowers with which they seem to mingle and blend.

"I have kept you waiting," she said, with the tone that a woman can always bring into her voice for the man whom she wishes to please.

"I would wait patiently through an eternity," said he, "if I were sure of finding a divinity so fair; but it is no compliment to speak of your beauty to you; nothing save worship could touch you. Suffer me only to kiss your scarf."

but to my thinking, from you men it is the most respectful flattery of all. Now, is it not? Just tell me."

Again she gave him a side glance to express her insidious friendship, for he was dumb with happiness—sheer happiness through such nothings as these! Oh, the Duchess understood *son métier de femme*—the art and mystery of being a woman—most marvelously well; she knew, to admiration, how to raise a man in his own esteem as he humbled himself to her; how to reward every step of the descent to sentimental folly with hollow flatteries.

"You will never forget to come at nine o'clock."

"No; but are you going to a ball every night?"

"Do I know?" she answered, with a little childlike shrug of the shoulders; the gesture was meant to say that she was nothing if not capricious, and that a lover must take her as she was.—"Besides," she added, "what is that to you? You shall be my escort."

"That would be difficult to-night," he objected; "I am not properly dressed."

"It seems to me," she returned loftily, "that if any one has a right to complain of your costume, it is I. Know, therefore, *monsieur le voyageur,* that if I accept a man's arm, he is forthwith above the laws of fashion, nobody would venture to criticise him. You do not know the world, I see; I like you the better for it."

And even as she spoke she swept him into the pettiness of that world by the attempt to initiate him into the vanities of a woman of fashion.

"If she chooses to do a foolish thing for me, I should be a simpleton to prevent her," said Armand to himself. "She has a liking for me beyond a doubt; and as for the world, she cannot despise it more than I do. So, now for the ball if she likes."

The Duchess probably thought that if the General came with her and appeared in a ballroom in boots and a black tie, nobody would hesitate to believe that he was violently in love with her. And the General was well pleased that the queen

of fashion should think of compromising herself for him; hope gave him wit. He had gained confidence, he brought out his thoughts and views; he felt nothing of the restraint that weighed on his spirits yesterday. His talk was interesting and animated, and full of those first confidences so sweet to make and to receive.

Was Mme. de Langeais really carried away by his talk, or had she devised this charming piece of coquetry? At any rate, she looked up mischievously as the clock struck twelve.

"Ah! you have made me too late for the ball!" she exclaimed, surprised and vexed that she had forgotten how time was going.

The next moment she approved the exchange of pleasures with a smile that made Armand's heart give a sudden leap.

"I certainly promised Mme. de Beauséant," she added. "They are all expecting me."

"Very well—go."

"No—go on. I will stay. Your Eastern adventures fasci-

She rang the bell. "I shall not go out to-night," she told the footman. Her long, blue eyes turned timidly to Armand; and by the look of misgiving in them, he knew that he was meant to take the order for a confession, for a first and great favor. There was a pause, filled with many thoughts, before she spoke with that tenderness which is often in women's voices, and not so often in their hearts. "You have had a hard life," she said.

"No," returned Armand. "Until to-day I did not know what happiness was."

"Then you know it now?" she asked, looking at him with a demure, keen glance.

"What is happiness for me henceforth but this—to see you, to hear you? . . . Until now I have only known privation; now I know that I can be unhappy——"

"That will do, that will do," she said. "You must go; it is past midnight. Let us regard appearances. People must not talk about us. I do not know quite what I shall say; but the headache is a good-natured friend, and tells no tales."

"Is there to be a ball to-morrow night?"

"You would grow accustomed to the life, I think. Very well. Yes, we will go again to-morrow night."

There was not a happier man in the world than Armand when he went out from her. Every evening he came to Mme. de Langeais' at the hour kept for him by a tacit understanding.

It would be tedious, and, for the many young men who carry a redundance of such sweet memories in their hearts, it were superfluous to follow the story step by step—the progress of a romance growing in those hours spent together, a romance controlled entirely by a woman's will. If sentiment went too fast, she would raise a quarrel over a word, or when words flagged behind her thoughts, she appealed to the feelings. Perhaps the only way of following such Penelope's progress is by marking its outward and visible signs.

As, for instance, within a few days of their first meeting, the assiduous General had won and kept the right to kiss his

lady's insatiable hands. Wherever Mme. de Langeais
M. de Montriveau was certain to be seen, till people jo
called him "Her Grace's orderly." And already he had
enemies; others were jealous, and envied him his po
Mme. de Langeais had attained her end. The Marq
Montriveau was among her numerous train of adorers,
means of humiliating those who boasted of their prog
her good graces, for she publicly gave him preferenc
them all.

"Decidedly, M. de Montriveau is the man for whc
Duchess shows a preference," pronounced Mme. de Sér

And who in Paris does not know what it means w
woman "shows a preference"? All went on therefore a
ing to prescribed rule. The anecdotes which peopl
pleased to circulate concerning the General put that w
in so formidable a light, that the more adroit quietly d
their pretensions to the Duchess, and remained in he
merely to turn the position to account, and to use her

de Pamiers had said. " 'Tis a first cousin to the eagle; he will carry you off to his eyrie if you do not take care."

Then Mme. de Langeais felt afraid. The shrewd old noble's words sounded like a prophecy. The next day she tried to turn love to hate. She was harsh, exacting, irritable, unbearable; Montriveau disarmed her with angelic sweetness. She so little knew the great generosity of a large nature, that the kindly jests with which her first complaints were met went to her heart. She sought a quarrel, and found proofs of affection. She persisted.

"When a man idolizes you, how can he have vexed you?" asked Armand.

"You do not vex me," she answered, suddenly grown gentle and submissive. "But why do you wish to compromise me? For me you ought to be nothing but a *friend*. Do you not know it? I wish I could see that you had the instincts, the delicacy of real friendship, so that I might lose neither your respect nor the pleasure that your presence gives me."

"Nothing but your *friend!*" he cried out. The terrible word sent an electric shock through his brain. "On the faith of these happy hours that you grant me, I sleep and wake in your heart. And now to-day, for no reason, you are pleased to destroy all the secret hopes by which I live. You have required promises of such constancy in me, you have said so much of your horror of women made up of nothing but caprice; and now do you wish me to understand that, like other women here in Paris, you have passions, and know nothing of love? If so, why did you ask my life of me? why did you accept it?"

"I was wrong, my friend. Oh, it is wrong of a woman to yield to such intoxication when she must not and cannot make any return."

"I understand. You have merely been coquetting with me, and——"

"Coquetting?" she repeated. "I detest coquetry. A coquette, Armand, makes promises to many, and gives herself to none; and a woman who keeps such promises is a libertine.

This much I believed I had grasped of our code. But to be melancholy with humorists, gay with the frivolous, and politic with ambitious souls; to listen to a babbler with every appearance of admiration, to talk of war with a soldier, wax enthusiastic with philanthropists over the good of the nation, and to give to each one his little dole of flattery,—it seems to me that this is as much a matter of necessity as dress, diamonds, and gloves, or flowers in one's hair. Such talk is the moral counterpart of the toilette. You take it up and lay it aside with the plumed head-dress. Do you call this coquetry? Why, I have never treated you as I treat every one else. With you, my friend, I am sincere. Have I not always shared your views, and when you convinced me after a discussion was I not always perfectly glad? In short, I love you, but only as a devout and pure woman may love. I have thought it over. I am a married woman, Armand. My way of life with M. de Langeais gives me liberty to bestow my heart; but law and custom leave me no right to dispose of my per-

"Ah!" said Armand, with the profound irony of a wounded heart in his words and tone. "Love, so the scribblers say, only feeds on illusions. Nothing could be truer, I see; I am expected to imagine that I am loved. But, there!—there are some thoughts like wounds, from which there is no recovery. My belief in you was one of the last left to me, and now I see that there is nothing left to believe in this earth."

She began to smile.

"Yes," Montriveau went on in an unsteady voice, "this Catholic faith to which you wish to convert me is a lie that men make for themselves; hope is a lie at the expense of the future; pride, a lie between us and our fellows; and pity, and prudence, and terror are cunning lies. And now my happiness is to be one more lying delusion; I am expected to delude myself, to be willing to give gold coin for silver to the end. If you can so easily dispense with my visits; if you can confess me neither as your friend nor your lover, you do not care for me! And I, poor fool that I am, tell myself this, and know it, and love you!"

"But, dear me, poor Armand, you are flying into a passion!"

"I flying into a passion?"

"Yes. You think that the whole question is opened because I ask you to be careful."

In her heart of hearts she was delighted with the anger that leaped out in her lover's eyes. Even as she tortured him, she was criticising him, watching every slightest change that passed over his face. If the General had been so unluckily inspired as to show himself generous without discussion (as happens occasionally with some artless souls), he would have been a banished man for ever, accused and convicted of not knowing how to love. Most women are not displeased to have their code of right and wrong broken through. Do they not flatter themselves that they never yield except to force? But Armand was not learned enough in this kind of lore to see the snare ingeniously spread for him by the Duchess. So much of the child was there in the strong man in love.

"If all you wave is to preserve appearances," he began in his complacency, "I am willing to——"

"Simply to preserve appearances!" the lady broke in; "why, what idea can you have of me? Have I given you the slightest reason to suppose that I can be yours?"

"Why, what else are we talking about?" demanded Montriveau.

"Monsieur, you frighten me! . . . No, pardon me. Thank you," she added, coldly; "thank you, Armand. You have given me timely warning of imprudence; committed quite unconsciously, believe it, my friend. You know how to [illegible] I also know how to endure. We will not see each other for a time; and then, when both of us have conquered to recover calmness to some extent, we will think about [illegible] for a happiness sanctioned by the world. I am [illegible] Armand; a man with no delicacy might tempt a woman of four-and-twenty to do many foolish, wild things for his sake. But you! You will be my friend, promise me

boudoir. "Dear Antoinette, I wield a more absolute power than the Autocrat of all the Russias. I have a compact with Fate; I can advance or retard destiny, so far as men are concerned, at my fancy, as you alter the hands of a watch. If you can direct the course of fate in our political machinery, it simply means (does it not?) that you understand the ins and outs of it. You shall be free before very long, and then you must remember your promise."

"Armand!" she cried. "What do you mean? Great heavens! Can you imagine that I am to be the prize of a crime? Do you want to kill me? Why! you cannot have any religion in you! For my own part, I fear God. M. de Langeais may have given me reason to hate him, but I wish him no manner of harm."

M. de Montriveau beat a tattoo on the marble chimney-piece, and only looked composedly at the lady.

"Dear," continued she, "respect him. He does not love me, he is not kind to me, but I have duties to fulfil with regard to him. What would I not do to avert the calamities with which you threaten him?—Listen," she continued after a pause. "I will not say another word about separation; you shall come here as in the past, and I will still give you my forehead to kiss. If I refused once or twice, it was pure coquetry, indeed it was. But let us understand each other," she added as he came closer. "You will permit me to add to the number of my satellites; to receive even more visitors in the morning than heretofore; I mean to be twice as frivolous; I mean to use you to all appearance very badly; to feign a rupture; you must come not quite so often, and then, afterwards——"

While she spoke, she had allowed him to put an arm about her waist, Montriveau was holding her tightly to him, and she seemed to feel the exceeding pleasure that women usually feel in that close contact, an earnest of the bliss of a closer union. And then, doubtless she meant to elicit some confidence, for she raised herself on tiptoe, and laid her forehead against Armand's burning lips.

"And then," Montriveau finished her sentence for her, "you shall not speak to me of your husband. You ought not to think of him again."

Mme. de Langeais was silent awhile.

"At least," she said, after a significant pause, "at least you will do all that I wish without grumbling, you will not be naughty; tell me so, my friend? You wanted to frighten me, did you not? Come, now, confess it? . . . You are too good ever to think of crimes. But is it possible that you can have secrets that I do not know? How can you control Fate?"

"Now, when you confirm the gift of the heart that you have already given me, I am far too happy to know exactly how to answer you. I can trust you, Antoinette; I shall have no suspicion, no unfounded jealousy of you. But if accident should set you free, we shall be one——"

"Accident, Armand?" (with that little dainty turn of the

of conjugal fidelity, her stock of excuses for refusing herself to his love. He had gained ground a little, and congratulated himself. And so for a time he took unfair advantage of the rights so hardly won. More a boy than he had ever been in his life, he gave himself up to all the childishness that makes first love the flower of life. He was a child again as he poured out all his soul, all the thwarted forces that passion had given him, upon her hands, upon the dazzling forehead that looked so pure to his eyes; upon her fair hair; on the tufted curls where his lips were pressed. And the Duchess, on whom his love was poured like a flood, was vanquished by the magnetic influence of her lover's warmth; she hesitated to begin the quarrel that must part them for ever. She was more a woman than she thought, this slight creature, in her effort to reconcile the demands of religion with the ever-new sensations of vanity, the semblance of pleasure which turns a Parisienne's head. Every Sunday she went to Mass; she never missed a service; then, when evening came, she was steeped in the intoxicating bliss of repressed desire. Armand and Mme. de Langeais, like Hindoo fakirs, found the reward of their continence in the temptations to which it gave rise. Possibly, the Duchess had ended by resolving love into fraternal caresses, harmless enough, as it might have seemed to the rest of the world, while they borrowed extremes of degradation from the license of her thoughts. How else explain the incomprehensible mystery of her continual fluctuations? Every morning she proposed to herself to shut her door on the Marquis de Montriveau; every evening, at the appointed hour, she fell under the charm of his presence. There was a languid defence; then she grew less unkind. Her words were sweet and soothing. They were lovers—lovers only could have been thus. For him the Duchess would display her most sparkling wit, her most captivating wiles; and when at last she had wrought upon his senses and his soul, she might submit herself passively to his fierce caresses, but she had her *nec plus ultra* of passion; and when once it was reached, she grew angry if he lost the mastery of himself and made as though

he would pass beyond. No woman on earth can brave the consequences of refusal without some motive; nothing is more natural than to yield to love; wherefore Mme. de Langeais promptly raised a second line of fortification, a stronghold less easy to carry than the first. She evoked the terrors of religion. Never did Father of the Church, however eloquent, plead the cause of God better than the Duchess. Never was the wrath of the Most High better justified than by her voice. She used no preacher's commonplaces, no rhetorical amplifications. No. She had a "pulpit-tremor" of her own. To Armand's most passionate entreaty, she replied with a tearful gaze, and a gesture in which a terrible plenitude of emotion found expression. She stopped his mouth with an appeal for mercy. She would not hear another word; if she did, she must succumb; and better death than criminal happiness.

"Is it nothing to disobey God?" she asked him, recovering a voice grown faint in the crises of inward struggles, through which the fair actress appeared to find it hard to preserve her

lecline to believe in God, for it is impossible to believe in man. Hush, do not talk like that. You have too great a nature o take up their Liberal nonsense with its pretension to abolish God."

Theological and political disputes acted like a cold douche on Montriveau; he calmed down; he could not return to love when the Duchess stirred up his wrath by suddenly setting him down a thousand miles away from the boudoir, discussing theories of absolute monarchy, which she defended to admiration. Few women venture to be democrats; the attitude of democratic champion is scarcely compatible with tyrannous feminine sway. But often, on the other hand, the General shook out his mane, dropped politics with a leonine growling and lashing of the flanks, and sprang upon his prey; he was no longer capable of carrying a heart and brain at such variance for very far; he came back, terrible with love, to his mistress. And she, if she felt the prick of fancy stimulated to a dangerous point, knew that it was time to leave her boudoir; she came out of the atmosphere surcharged with desires that she drew in with her breath, sat down to the piano and sang the most exquisite songs of modern music, and so baffled the physical attraction which at times showed her no mercy, though she was strong enough to fight it down.

At such times she was something sublime in Armand's eyes; she was not acting; she was genuine; the unhappy lover was convinced that she loved him. Her egoistic resistance deluded him into a belief that she was a pure and sainted woman; he resigned himself; he talked of Platonic love, did this artillery officer.

When Mme. de Langeais had played with religion sufficiently to suit her own purposes, she played with it again for Armand's benefit. She wanted to bring him back to a Christian frame of mind; she brought out her edition of *Le Génie du Christianisme*, adapted for the use of military men. Montriveau chafed; his yoke was heavy. Oh! at that, possessed by the spirit of contradiction, she dinned religion into his ears, to see whether God might not rid her of this suitor,

for the man's persistence was beginning to frighten her. And in any case she was glad to prolong any quarrel, if it bade fair to keep the dispute on moral grounds for an indefinite period; the material struggle which followed it was more dangerous.

But if the time of her opposition on the ground of the marriage law might be said to be the *époque civile* of this sentimental warfare, the ensuing phase which might be taken to constitute the *époque religieuse* had also its crisis and consequent decline of severity.

Armand, happening to come in very early one evening, found M. l'Abbé Gondrand, the Duchess' spiritual director, established in an armchair by the fireside, looking as a spiritual director might be expected to look while digesting his dinner and the charming sins of his penitent. In the ecclesiastic's bearing there was a stateliness befitting a dignitary of the Church; and the episcopal violet hue already appeared

her case better than the Abbé had done, and regretting that the Chamber of Peers, unlike the English House of Lords, had no bench of bishops. Nevertheless, the Abbé rose, yielded his place to the General, and took his leave, knowing that in Lent he could play a return game. As for the Duchess, Montriveau's behavior had excited her curiosity to such a pitch that she scarcely rose to return her director's low bow.

"What is the matter with you, my friend?"

"Why, I cannot stomach that Abbé of yours."

"Why did you not take a book?" she asked, careless whether the Abbé, then closing the door, heard her or no.

The General paused, for the gesture which accompanied the Duchess' speech further increased the exceeding insolence of her words.

"My dear Antoinette, thank you for giving love precedence of the Church; but, for pity's sake, allow me to ask one question."

"Oh! you are questioning me! I am quite willing. You are my friend, are you not? I certainly can open the bottom of my heart to you; you will see only one image there."

"Do you talk about our love to that man?"

"He is my confessor."

"Does he know that I love you?"

"M. de Montriveau, you cannot claim, I think, to penetrate the secrets of the confessional?"

"Does that man know all about our quarrels and my love for you?——"

"That man, monsieur; say God!"

"God again! *I* ought to be alone in your heart. But leave God alone where He is, for the love of God and me. Madame, you *shall not* go to confession again, or——"

"Or?" she repeated sweetly.

"Or I will never come back here."

"Then go, Armand. Good-bye, good-bye for ever."

She rose and went to her boudoir without so much as a glance at Armand, as he stood with his hand on the back of

a chair. How long he stood there motionless he himself never knew. The soul within has the mysterious power of expanding as of contracting space.

He opened the door of the boudoir. It was dark within. A faint voice raised to say sharply:

"I did not ring. What made you come in without orders? Go away, Suzette."

"Then you are ill," exclaimed Montriveau.

"Stand up, monsieur, and go out of the room for a minute at any rate," she said, ringing the bell.

"Mme. la Duchesse rang for lights?" said the footman, coming in with the candles. When the lovers were alone together, Mme. de Langeais still lay on the couch; she was just as silent and motionless as if Montriveau had not been there.

"Dear, I was wrong," he began, a note of pain and a sublime kindness in his voice. "Indeed, I would not have you

set Christian sentiments aside; you cannot understand them. Let me simply speak to you of expediency. Would you forbid a woman at court the table of the Lord when it is customary to take the sacrament at Easter? People must certainly do something for their party. The Liberals, whatever they may wish to do, will never destroy the religious instinct. Religion will always be a political necessity. Would you undertake to govern a nation of logic-choppers? Napoleon was afraid to try; he persecuted ideologists. If you want to keep people from reasoning, you must give them something to feel. So let us accept the Roman Catholic Church with all its consequences. And if we would have France go to mass, ought we not to begin by going ourselves? Religion, you see, Armand, is a bond uniting all the conservative principles which enable the rich to live in tranquillity. Religion and the rights of property are intimately connected. It is certainly a finer thing to lead a nation by ideas of morality than by fear of the scaffold, as in the time of the Terror—the one method by which your odious Revolution could enforce obedience. The priest and the king—that means you, and me, and the Princess my neighbor; and, in a word, the interests of all honest people personified. There, my friend, just be so good as to belong to your party, you that might be its Scylla if you had the slightest ambition that way. I know nothing about politics myself; I argue from my own feelings; but still I know enough to guess that society would be overturned if people were always calling its foundations in question——"

"If that is how your Court and your Government think, I am sorry for you," broke in Montriveau. "The Restoration, madame, ought to say, like Catherine de Medici, when she heard that the battle of Dreux was lost, 'Very well; now we will go to the meeting-house.' Now 1815 was your battle of Dreux. Like the royal power of those days, you won in fact, while you lost in right. Political Protestantism has gained an ascendency over people's minds. If you have no mind to issue your Edict of Nantes; or if, when it is issued, you publish a Revocation; if you should one day be accused

and convicted of repudiating the Charter, which is simply a pledge given to maintain the interests established under the Republic, then the Revolution will rise again, terrible in her strength, and strike but a single blow. It will not be the Revolution that will go into exile; she is the very soil of France. Men die, but people's interests do not die. . . . Eh, great Heavens! what are France and the crown and rightful sovereigns, and the whole world besides, to us? Idle words compared with my happiness. Let them reign or be hurled from the throne, little do I care. Where am I now?"

"In the Duchesse de Langeais' boudoir, my friend."

"No, no. No more of the Duchess, no more of Langeais; I am with my dear Antoinette."

"Will you do me the pleasure to stay where you are," she said, laughing and pushing him back, gently however.

"So you have never loved me," he retorted, and anger flashed in lightning from his eyes.

"No, dear;" but the "No" was equivalent to "Yes."

this language of the spirit and senses. *Andiamo mio ben* can draw tears of joy or pitying laughter at the will of the singer; and not unfrequently one here and there in the world, some girl unable to live and bear the heavy burden of an unguessed pain, some man whose soul vibrates with the throb of passion, may take up a musical theme, and lo! heaven is opened for them, or they find a language for themselves in some sublime melody, some song lost to the world.

The General was listening now to such a song; a mysterious music unknown to all other ears, as the solitary plaint of some mateless bird dying alone in a virgin forest.

"Great Heavens! what are you playing there?" he asked in an unsteady voice.

"The prelude of a ballad, called, I believe, *Fleuve du Tage*."

"I did not know that there was such music in a piano," he returned.

"Ah!" she said, and for the first time she looked at him as a woman looks at the man she loves, "nor do you know, my friend, that I love you, and that you cause me horrible suffering; and that I feel that I must utter my cry of pain without putting it too plainly into words. If I did not, I should yield—— But you see nothing."

"And you will not make me happy?"

"Armand, I should die of sorrow the next day."

The General turned abruptly from her and went. But out in the streets he brushed away the tears that he would not let fall.

The religious phase lasted for three months. At the end of that time the Duchess grew weary of vain repetitions; the Deity, bound hand and foot, was delivered up to her lover. Possibly she may have feared that by sheer dint of talking of eternity she might perpetuate his love in this world and the next. For her own sake, it must be believed that no man had touched her heart, or her conduct would be inexcusable. She was young; the time when men and women feel that they cannot afford to lose time or to quibble over their joys was still far off. She, no doubt, was on the verge not of first

love, but of her first experience of the bliss of love. And from inexperience, for want of the painful lessons which would have taught her the value of the treasure poured out at her feet, she was playing with it. Knowing nothing of the glory and rapture of the light, she was fain to stay in the shadow.

Armand was just beginning to understand this strange situation; he put his hope in the first word spoken by nature. Every evening, as he came away from Mme. de Langeais', he told himself that no woman would accept the tenderest, most delicate proofs of a man's love during seven months, nor yield passively to the slighter demands of passion, only to cheat love at the last. He was waiting patiently for the sun to gain power, not doubting but that he should receive the earliest fruits. The married woman's hesitations and the religious scruples he could quite well understand. He even rejoiced over those battles. He mistook the Duchess' heartless coquetry for modesty; and he would not have had her otherwise. So he had loved to see her devising obstacles; was he not gradually tri-

his desire. When was a man's desire a secret? And have not women an intuitive knowledge of the meaning of certain changes of countenance?

"What! you wish to be my friend no longer?" she broke in at the first words, and a divine red surging like new blood under the transparent skin, lent brightness to her eyes. "As a reward for my generosity, you would dishonor me? Just reflect a little. I myself have thought much over this; and I think always for us *both*. There is such a thing as a woman's loyalty, and we can no more fail in it than you can fail in honor. *I* cannot blind myself. If I am yours, how, in any sense, can I be M. de Langeais' wife? Can you require the sacrifice of my position, my rank, my whole life in return for a doubtful love that could not wait patiently for seven months? What! already you would rob me of the right to dispose of myself? No, no; you must not talk like this again. No, not another word. I will not, I cannot listen to you."

Mme. de Langeais raised both hands to her head to push back the tufted curls from her hot forehead; she seemed very much excited.

"You come to a weak woman with your purpose definitely planned out. You say—'For a certain length of time she will talk to me of her husband, then of God, and then of the inevitable consequences. But I will use and abuse the ascendency I shall gain over her; I will make myself indispensable; all the bonds of habit, all the misconstructions of outsiders, will make for me; and at length, when our *liaison* is taken for granted by all the world, I shall be this woman's master.'—Now, be frank; these are your thoughts! Oh! you calculate, and you say that you love. Shame on you! You are enamored? Ah! that I well believe! You wish to possess me, to have me for your mistress, that is all! Very well then, No! The *Duchesse de Langeais* will not descend so far. Simple *bourgeoises* may be the victims of your treachery—I, never! Nothing gives me assurance of your love. You speak of my beauty; I may lose every trace of it in six months, like

the dear Princess, my neighbor. You are captivated by my [illegible], my grace. Great Heavens! you would soon grow used to them and to the pleasures of possession. Have not the little concessions that I was weak enough to make come to be a matter of course in the last few months? Some day, when ruin comes, you will give me no reason for the change in you beyond a curt, 'I have ceased to care for you.'—Then, rank and fortune and honor and all that was the Duchesse de Langeais will be swallowed up in one disappointed hope. I shall have children to bear witness to my shame, and——" With an involuntary gesture she interrupted herself, and continued: "But I am too good-natured to explain all this to you when you know it better than I. Come! let us stay as we are. I am only too fortunate in that I can still break these bonds which you think so strong. Is there anything so very heroic in coming to the Hôtel de Langeais to spend an evening with a woman whose prattle amuses you?—a woman

only reply to the torrent of flute notes was a silence filled with cruelly painful thoughts. He was just beginning to see that this woman was playing with him; he divined instinctively that a devoted love, a responsive love, does not reason and count the consequences in this way. Then, as he heard her reproach him with detestable motives, he felt something like shame as he remembered that unconsciously he had made those very calculations. With angelic honesty of purpose, he looked within, and self-examination found nothing but selfishness in all his thoughts and motives, in the answers which he framed and could not utter. He was self-convicted. In his despair he longed to fling himself from the window. The egoism of it was intolerable.

What indeed can a man say when a woman will not believe in love?—Let me prove how much I love you?—The *I* is always there.

The heroes of the boudoir, in such circumstances, can follow the example of the primitive logician who preceded the Pyrrhonists and denied movement. Montriveau was not equal to this feat. With all his audacity, he lacked this precise kind which never deserts an adept in the formulas of feminine algebra. If so many women, and even the best of women, fall a prey to a kind of expert to whom the vulgar give a grosser name, it is perhaps because the said experts are great *provers*, and love, in spite of its delicious poetry of sentiment, requires a little more geometry than people are wont to think.

Now the Duchess and Montriveau were alike in this—they were both equally unversed in love lore. The lady's knowledge of theory was but scanty; in practice she knew nothing whatever; she felt nothing, and reflected over everything. Montriveau had had but little experience, was absolutely ignorant of theory, and felt too much to reflect at all. Both therefore were enduring the consequences of the singular situation. At that supreme moment the myriad thoughts in his mind might have been reduced to the formula—"Submit to be mine——" words which seem horribly selfish to a

women for whom they awaken no memories, recall no ideas. Something nevertheless he must say. And what was more, though her barbed shafts had set his blood tingling, though the short phrases that she discharged at him one by one were very keen and sharp and cold, he must control himself lest he should lose all by an outbreak of anger.

"Mme. la Duchesse, I am in despair that God should have invented no way for a woman to confirm the gift of her heart save by adding the gift of her person. The high value which you yourself put upon the gift teaches me that I cannot attach too importance to it. If you have given me your utmost self and your whole heart, as you tell me, what can the rest matter? And besides, if my happiness means so painful a sacrifice, let us say no more about it. But you must par- [illegible] he feels humiliated at being taken for a [illegible]

[illegible] the last remark was uttered might per-

"After all, my friend, you cannot prevent a woman from trembling at the question, 'Will this love last always?' Hard though my words may be, the dread of losing you puts them into my mouth. Oh, me! it is not I who speak, dear, it is reason; and how should any one so mad as I be reasonable? In truth, I am nothing of the sort."

The poignant irony of her answer had changed before the end into the most musical accents in which a woman could find utterance for ingenuous love. To listen to her words was to pass in a moment from martyrdom to heaven. Montriveau grew pale; and for the first time in his life, he fell on his knees before a woman. He kissed the Duchess' skirt hem, her knees, her feet; but for the credit of the Faubourg Saint-Germain it is necessary to respect the mysteries of its boudoirs, where many are fain to take the utmost that Love can give without giving proof of love in return.

The Duchess thought herself generous when she suffered herself to be adored. But Montriveau was in a wild frenzy of joy over her complete surrender of the position.

"Dear Antoinette," he cried. "Yes, you are right; I will not have you doubt any longer. I too am trembling at this moment—lest the angel of my life should leave me; I wish I could invent some tie that might bind us to each other irrevocably."

"Ah!" she said, under her breath, "so I was right, you see."

"Let me say all that I have to say; I will scatter all your fears with a word. Listen! if I deserted you, I should deserve to die a thousand deaths. Be wholly mine, and I will give you the right to kill me if I am false. I myself will write a letter explaining certain reasons for taking my own life; I will make my final arrangements, in short. You shall have the letter in your keeping; in the eye of the law it will be a sufficient explanation of my death. You can avenge yourself, and fear nothing from God or men."

"What good would the letter be to me? What would life be if I had lost your love? If I wished to kill you, should I not

be ready to follow? No; thank you for the thought, but I do not want the letter. Should I not begin to dread that you were faithful to me through fear? And if a man knows that he must risk his life for a stolen pleasure, might it not seem more tempting? Armand, the thing I ask of you is the one thing hard to do."

"Then what is it that you wish?"

"Your obedience and my liberty."

"Ah, God!" cried he, "I am a child."

"A wayward, much spoilt child," she said, stroking the thick hair, for his head still lay on her knee. "Ah! and loved far more than he believes, and yet he is very disobedient. Why not stay as we are? Why not sacrifice to me the desires that hurt me? Why not take what I can give, when it is all that I can honestly grant? Are you not happy?"

"Oh yes, I am happy when I have not a doubt left. Antoinette, doubt in love is a kind of death, is it not?"

the morning. From that moment this woman, whom he loved, was neither a duchess nor a Navarreins; Antoinette, in her disguises, had gone so far as to appear to be a woman. On that most blissful evening, the sweetest prelude ever played by a Parisienne to what the world calls "a slip"; in spite of all her affectations of a coyness which she did not feel, the General saw all maidenly beauty in her. He had some excuse for believing that so many storms of caprice had been but clouds covering a heavenly soul; that these must be lifted one by one like the veils that hid her divine loveliness. The Duchess became, for him, the most simple and girlish mistress; she was the one woman in the world for him; and he went away quite happy in that at last he had brought her to give him such pledges of love, that it seemed to him impossible but that he should be but her husband henceforth in secret, her choice sanctioned by Heaven.

Armand went slowly home, turning this thought in his mind with the impartiality of a man who is conscious of all the responsibilities that love lays on him while he tastes the sweetness of its joys. He went along the Quais to see the widest possible space of sky; his heart had grown in him; he would fain have had the bounds of the firmament and of earth enlarged. It seemed to him that his lungs drew an ampler breath. In the course of his self-examination, as he walked, he vowed to love this woman so devoutly, that every day of her life she should find absolution for her sins against society in unfailing happiness. Sweet stirrings of life when life is at the full! The man that is strong enough to steep his soul in the color of one emotion, feels infinite joy as glimpses open out for him of an ardent lifetime that knows no diminution of passion to the end; even so it is permitted to certain mystics, in ecstasy, to behold the Light of God. Love would be naught without the belief that it would last for ever; love grows great through constancy. It was thus that, wholly absorbed by his happiness, Montriveau understood passion.

"We belong to each other for ever!"

The thought was like a talisman fulfilling the wishes of his life. He did not ask whether the Duchess might not change, whether her love might not last. No, for he had faith. Without that virtue there is no future for Christianity, and perhaps it is even more necessary to society. A conception of life as feeling occurred to him for the first time; hitherto he had lived by action, the most strenuous exertion of human energies, the physical devotion, as it may be called, of the soldier.

Next day M. de Montriveau went early in the direction of the Faubourg Saint-Germain. He had made an appointment at a house not far from the Hôtel de Langeais; and the business over, he went thither as if to his own home. The General's companion chanced to be a man for whom he felt a kind of repulsion whenever he met him in other houses. This was the Marquis de Ronquerolles, whose reputation had grown so great in Paris boudoirs. He was witty, clever, and what was more—courageous; he set the fashion to all the

have nothing more to say. Come, give me your confidence. There is no occasion to waste your time in grafting your great nature on that unthankful stock, when all your hopes and cultivation will come to nothing."

Armand ingenuously made a kind of general report of his position, enumerating with much minuteness the slender rights so hardly won. Ronquerolles burst into a peal of laughter so heartless, that it would have cost any other man his life. But from their manner of speaking and looking at each other during their colloquy beneath the wall, in a corner almost as remote from intrusion as the desert itself, it was easy to imagine the friendship between the two men knew no bounds, and that no power on earth could estrange them.

"My dear Armand, why did you not tell me that the Duchess was a puzzle to you? I would have given you a little advice which might have brought your flirtation properly through. You must know, to begin with, that the women of our Faubourg, like any other women, love to steep themselves in love; but they have a mind to possess and not to be possessed. They have made a sort of compromise with human nature. The code of their parish gives them a pretty wide latitude short of the last transgression. The sweets enjoyed by this fair Duchess of yours are so many venial sins to be washed away in the waters of penitence. But if you had the impertinence to ask in earnest for the mortal sin to which naturally you are sure to attach the highest importance, you would see the deep disdain with which the door of the boudoir and the house would be incontinently shut upon you. The tender Antoinette would dismiss everything from her memory; you would be less than a cipher for her. She would wipe away your kisses, my dear friend, as indifferently as she would perform her ablutions. She would sponge love from her cheeks as she washes off rouge. We know women of that sort—the thoroughbred Parisienne. Have you ever noticed a grisette tripping along the street? Her face is as good as a picture. A pretty cap, fresh cheeks, trim hair, a guileful smile, and the rest of her almost neglected. Is not this true

to the life? Well, that is the Parisienne. She knows that her face is all that will be seen, so she devotes all her care, finery, and vanity to her head The Duchess is the same; the head is everything with her. She can only feel through her intellect, her heart lies in her brain, she is a sort of intellectual epicure, she has a head-voice. We call that kind of poor creature a Laïs of the intellect. You have been taken in like a boy. If you doubt it, you can have proof of it to-night, this morning, this instant. Go up to her, try the demand as an experiment, insist peremptorily if it is refused. You might set about it like the late Maréchal de Richelieu, and get nothing for your pains."

Armand was dumb with amazement.

"Has your desire reached the point of infatuation?"

"I want her at any cost!" Montriveau cried out despairingly.

"Very well. Now, look here. Be as inexorable as she is herself. Try to humiliate her, to sting her vanity. Do not

lated—then, perhaps, passion may enter among the steel springs of this machinery that turns out tears and affectations and languors and melting phrases; then you shall see a most magnificent conflagration (always supposing that the chimney takes fire). The steel feminine system will glow red-hot like iron in the forge; that kind of heat lasts longer than any other, and the glow of it may possibly turn to love.

"Still," he continued, "I have my doubts. And, after all, is it worth while to take so much trouble with the Duchess? Between ourselves, a man of my stamp ought first to take her in hand and break her in; I would make a charming woman of her; she is a thoroughbred; whereas, you two left to yourselves will never get beyond the A B C. But you are in love with her, and just now you might not perhaps share my views on this subject—— A pleasant time to you, my children," added Ronquerolles, after a pause. Then with a laugh: "I have decided myself for facile beauties; they are tender, at any rate, the natural woman appears in their love without any of your social seasonings. A woman that haggles over herself, my poor boy, and only means to inspire love! Well, have her like an extra horse—for show. The match between the sofa and confessional, black and white, queen and knight, conscientious scruples and pleasure, is an uncommonly amusing game of chess. And if a man knows the game, let him be never so little of a rake, he wins in three moves. Now, if I undertook a woman of that sort, I should start with the deliberate purpose of——" His voice sank to a whisper over the last words in Armand's ear, and he went before there was time to reply.

As for Montriveau, he sprang at a bound across the courtyard of the Hôtel de Langeais, went unannounced up the stairs straight to the Duchess' bedroom.

"This is an unheard-of thing," she said, hastily wrapping her dressing gown about her. "Armand! this is abominable of you! Come, leave the room, I beg. Just go out of the room, and go at once. Wait for me in the drawing-room.—Come now!"

"Dear angel, has a plighted lover no privilege whatsoever?"

"But, monsieur, it is in the worst possible taste of a plighted lover or a wedded husband to break in like this upon his wife."

He came up to the Duchess, took her in his arms, and held her tightly to him.

"Forgive, dear Antoinette; but a host of horrid doubts are fermenting in my heart."

"*Doubts?* Fie!—Oh, fie on you!"

"Doubts all but justified. If you loved me, would you make this quarrel? Would you not be glad to see me? Would you not have felt a something stir in your heart? For I, that am not a woman, feel a thrill in my inmost self at the mere sound of your voice. Often in a ballroom a longing has come upon me to spring to your side and put my arms about your neck."

"Oh! if you have doubts of me so long as I am not ready to

Armand of sheepishness; and further, there came to his aid that rapid power of intuition which passion will develop at moments in the least wise among mortals, while a great man at such a time possesses it to the full. He guessed the terrible truth revealed by the Duchess' nonchalance, and his heart swelled with the storm like a lake rising in flood.

"If you told me the truth yesterday, be mine, dear Antoinette," he cried; "you shall——"

"In the first place," said she composedly, thrusting him back as he came nearer—"in the first place, you are not to compromise me. My woman might overhear you. Respect me, I beg of you. Your familiarity is all very well in my boudoir in an evening; here it is quite different. Besides, what may your 'you shall' mean? 'You shall.' No one as yet has ever used that word to me. It is quite ridiculous, it seems to me, absolutely ridiculous."

"Will you surrender nothing to me on this point?"

"Oh! do you call a woman's right to dispose of herself a 'point'? A capital point indeed; you will permit me to be entirely my own mistress on that 'point.'"

"And how if, believing in your promises to me, I should absolutely require it?"

"Oh! then you would prove that I made the greatest possible mistake when I made you a promise of any kind; and I should beg you to leave me in peace."

The General's face grew white; he was about to spring to her side, when Mme. de Langeais rang the bell, the maid appeared, and, smiling with a mocking grace, the Duchess added, "Be so good as to return when I am visible."

Then Montriveau felt the hardness of a woman as cold and keen as a steel blade; she was crushing in her scorn. In one moment she had snapped the bonds which held firm only for her lover. She had read Armand's intention in his face, and held that the moment had come for teaching the Imperial soldier his lesson. He was to be made to feel that though duchesses may lend themselves to love, they do not give themselves, and that the conquest of one of them would prove a harder matter than the conquest of Europe.

"Madame," returned Armand, "I have not time to wait. I am a spoilt child, as you told me yourself. When I seriously resolve to have that of which we have been speaking, I shall have it."

"You will have it?" queried she, and there was a trace of surprise in her loftiness.

"I shall have it."

"Oh! you would do me a great pleasure by 'resolving' to have it. For curiosity's sake, I should be delighted to know how you would set about it——"

"I am delighted to put a new interest into your life," interrupted Montriveau, breaking into a laugh which dismayed the Duchess. "Will you permit me to take you to the ball to-night?"

"A thousand thanks. M. de Marsay has been beforehand with you. I gave him my promise."

Montriveau bowed gravely and went.

"So Monquinvilles was right," thought he, "and now for a

reaching her heart. He inclined to think that there was something diabolical about this woman, who was gracious to him and radiant with charming smiles; probably because she had no wish to allow the world to think that she had compromised herself with M. de Montriveau. Coolness on both sides is a sign of love; but so long as the Duchess was the same as ever, while the Marquis looked sullen and morose, was it not plain that she had conceded nothing? Onlookers know the rejected lover by various signs and tokens; they never mistake the genuine symptoms for a coolness such as some women command their adorers to feign, in the hope of concealing their love. Every one laughed at Montriveau; and he, having omitted to consult his cornac, was abstracted and ill at ease. M. de Ronquerolles would very likely have bidden him compromise the Duchess by responding to her show of friendliness by passionate demonstrations; but as it was, Armand de Montriveau came away from the ball, loathing human nature, and even then scarcely ready to believe in such complete depravity.

"If there is no executioner for such crimes," he said, as he looked up at the lighted windows of the ballroom where the most enchanting women in Paris were dancing, laughing, and chatting, "I will take you by the nape of the neck, Mme. la Duchesse, and make you feel something that bites more deeply than the knife in the Place de la Grève. Steel against steel; we shall see which heart will leave the deeper mark."

For a week or so Mme. de Langeais hoped to see the Marquis de Montriveau again; but he contented himself with sending his card every morning to the Hôtel de Langeais. The Duchess could not help shuddering each time that the card was brought in, and a dim foreboding crossed her mind, but the thought was vague as a presentiment of disaster. When her eye fell on the name, it seemed to her that she felt the touch of the implacable man's strong hand in her hair; sometimes the words seemed like a prognostication of vengeance which her lively intellect invented in the most shocking forms. She had studied him too well not to dread him.

"One of the things that struck me most on the journey," he was saying (and the Duchess listened with all her ears), "was the remark which the man makes at Westminster when you are shown the axe with which a man in a mask cut off Charles the First's head, so they tell you. The King made it first of all to some inquisitive person, and they repeat it still in memory of him."

"What does the man say?" asked Mme. de Sérizy.

"Do not touch the axe!" replied Montriveau, and there was menace in the sound of his voice.

"Really, my Lord Marquis," said Mme. de Langeais, "you tell this old story that everybody knows if they have been to London, and look at my neck in such a melodramatic way that you seem to me to have an axe in your hand."

The Duchess was in a cold sweat, but nevertheless she laughed as she spoke the last words.

"But circumstances give the story a quite new application,"

"Would you not regret the lovely face that——?"

"Oh! indeed I should, but less for my own sake than for the sake of some one else whose delight it might have been. And, after all, if I were loved, always loved, and truly loved, what would my beauty matter to me?—What do you say, Clara?"

"It is a dangerous speculation," replied Mme. de Sérizy.

"Is it permissible to ask His Majesty the King of Sorcerers when I made the mistake of touching the axe, since I have not been to London as yet?——"

"*Not so,*" he answered in English, with a burst of ironical laughter.

"And when will the punishment begin?"

At this Montriveau coolly took out his watch, and ascertained the hour with a truly appalling air of conviction.

"A dreadful misfortune will befall you before this day is out."

"I am not a child to be easily frightened, or rather, I am a child ignorant of danger," said the Duchess. "I shall dance now without fear on the edge of the precipice."

"I am delighted to know that you have so much strength of character," he answered, as he watched her go to take her place in a square dance.

But the Duchess, in spite of her apparent contempt for Armand's dark prophecies, was really frightened. Her late lover's presence weighed upon her morally and physically with a sense of oppression that scarcely ceased when he left the ballroom. And yet when she had drawn freer breath, and enjoyed the relief for a moment, she found herself regretting the sensation of dread, so greedy of extreme sensations is the feminine nature. The regret was not love, but it was certainly akin to other feelings which prepare the way for love. And then—as if the impression which Montriveau had made upon her were suddenly revived—she recollected his air of conviction as he took out his watch, and in a sudden spasm of dread she went out.

By this time it was about midnight. One of her servants,

waiting with her pelisse, went down to order her carriage. On her way home she fell naturally enough to musing over M. de Montriveau's prediction. Arrived in her own courtyard, as she supposed, she entered a vestibule almost like that of her own hotel, and suddenly saw that the staircase was different. She was in a strange house. Turning to call her servants, she was attacked by several men, who rapidly flung a handkerchief over her mouth, bound her hand and foot, and carried her off. She shrieked aloud.

"Madame, our orders are to kill you if you scream," a voice said in her ear.

So great was the Duchess' terror, that she could never recollect how nor by whom she was transported. When she came to herself, she was lying on a couch in a bachelor's lodging, her hands and feet tied with silken cords. In spite of herself, she shrieked aloud as she looked round and met Armand de Montriveau's eyes. He was sitting in his dressing-gown, quietly smoking a cigar in his armchair.

carpet covered the floor. A black sofa, a table littered with papers, two big easy-chairs, a chest of drawers with an alarm clock by way of ornament, a very low bedstead with a coverlet flung over it—a red cloth with a black key border,—all these things made part of a whole that told of a life reduced to its simplest terms. A triple candle sconce of Egyptian design on the chimney-piece recalled the vast spaces of the desert and Montriveau's long wanderings; a huge sphinx-claw stood out beneath the folds of stuff at the bedfoot; and just beyond, a green curtain with a black and scarlet border was suspended by large rings from a spear handle above a door near one corner of the room. The other door by which the band had entered was likewise curtained, but the drapery hung from an ordinary curtain-rod. As the Duchess finally noted that the pattern was the same on both, she saw that the door at the bedfoot stood open; gleams of ruddy light from the room beyond flickered below the fringed border. Naturally, the ominous light roused her curiosity; she fancied she could distinguish strange shapes in the shadows; but as it did not occur to her at the time that danger could come from that quarter, she tried to gratify a more ardent curiosity.

"Monsieur, if it is not indiscreet, may I ask what you mean to do with me?" The insolence and irony of the tone stung through the words. The Duchess quite believed that she read extravagant love in Montriveau's speech. He had carried her off; was not that in itself an acknowledgment of her power?

"Nothing whatever, madame," he returned, gracefully puffing the last whiff of cigar smoke. "You will remain here for a short time. First of all, I should like to explain to you what you are, and what I am. I cannot put my thoughts into words whilst you are twisting on the sofa in your boudoir; and besides, in your own house you take offence at the slightest hint, you ring the bell, make an outcry, and turn your lover out at the door as if he were the basest of wretches. Here my mind is unfettered. Here nobody can turn me out. Here you shall be my victim for a few seconds, and you are going to be so

exceedingly kind as to listen to me. You need fear nothing. I did not carry you off to insult you, nor yet to take by force what you refused to grant of your own will to my unworthiness. I could not stoop so low. You possibly think of outrage; for myself, I have no such thoughts."

He flung his cigar coolly into the fire.

"The smoke is unpleasant to you, no doubt, madame?" he said, and rising at once, he took a chafing-dish from the hearth, burned perfumes, and purified the air. The Duchess' astonishment was only equaled by her humiliation. She was in this man's power; and he would not abuse his power. The eyes in which love had once blazed like flame were now quiet and steady as stars. She trembled. Her dread of Armand was increased by a nightmare sensation of restlessness and utter inability to move; she felt as if she were turned to stone. She lay passive in the grip of fear. She thought she saw the light behind the curtains grow to a blaze, as if blown up by a pair of bellows; in another moment the gleams of flame grew

tion; to teach him to understand happiness to the full, only to snatch it from him; to rob him of his future of felicity; to slay his happiness not merely to-day, but as long as his life lasts, by poisoning every hour of it, and every thought—this I call a fearful crime!"

"Monsieur——"

"I cannot allow you to answer me yet. So listen to me still. In any case I have rights over you; but I only choose to exercise one—the right of the judge over the criminal, so that I may arouse your conscience. If you had no conscience left, I should not reproach you at all; but you are so young! You must feel some life still in your heart; or so I like to believe. While I think of you as depraved enough to do a wrong which the law does not punish, I do not think you so degraded that you cannot comprehend the full meaning of my words. I resume."

As he spoke the Duchess heard the smothered sound of a pair of bellows. Those mysterious figures which she had just seen were blowing up the fire, no doubt; the glow shone through the curtain. But Montriveau's lurid face was turned upon her; she could not choose but wait with a fast-beating heart and eyes fixed in a stare. However curious she felt, the heat in Armand's words interested her even more than the crackling of the mysterious flames.

"Madame," he went on after a pause, "if some poor wretch commits a murder in Paris, it is the executioner's duty, you know, to lay hands on him and stretch him on the plank, where murderers pay for their crimes with their heads. Then the newspapers inform every one, rich and poor, so that the former are assured that they may sleep in peace, and the latter are warned that they must be on the watch if they would live. Well, you that are religious, and even a little of a bigot, may have masses said for such a man's soul. You both belong to the same family, but yours is the elder branch; and the elder branch may occupy high places in peace and live happily and without cares. Want or anger may drive your brother the convict to take a man's life; you have taken more, you

have taken the joy out of a man's life, you have killed all that was best in his life—his dearest beliefs. The murderer simply lay in wait for his victim, and killed him reluctantly, and in fear of the scaffold; but *you* . . . .! You heaped up every sin that weakness can commit against strength that suspected no evil; you tamed a passive victim, the better to gnaw his heart out; you lured him with caresses; you left nothing undone that could set him dreaming, imagining, longing for the bliss of love. You asked innumerable sacrifices of him, only to refuse to make any in return He should see the light indeed before you put out his eyes! It is wonderful how you found the heart to do it! Such villainies demand a display of resource quite above the comprehension of those bourgeoises whom you laugh at and despise. They can give and forgive; they know how to love and suffer. The grandeur of their devotion dwarfs us. Rising higher in the social scale, one finds just as much mud as at the lower end; but with this difference, at the upper end it is hard and gilded over.

That will do, madame, do not cry. I cannot bear it any longer. Other men will tell you that you have given them life; as for myself, I tell you, with rapture, that you have given me blank extinction. Perhaps you guess that I am not my own, that I am bound to live for my friends, that from this time forth I must endure the cold chill of death, as well as the burden of life? Is it possible that there can be so much kindness in you? Are you like the desert tigress that licks the wounds she has inflicted?"

The Duchess burst out sobbing.

"Pray, spare your tears, madame. If I believed in them at all, it would merely set me on my guard. Is this another of your artifices? or is it not? You have used so many with me; how can one think that there is any truth in you? Nothing that you do or say has any power now to move me. That is all I have to say."

Mme. de Langeais rose to her feet, with a great dignity and humility in her bearing.

"You are right to treat me very hardly," she said, holding out a hand to the man, who did not take it; "you have not spoken hardly enough; and I deserve this punishment."

"*I* punish you, madame! A man must love still, to punish, must he not? From me you must expect no feeling, nothing resembling it. If I chose, I might be accuser and judge in my cause, and pronounce and carry out the sentence. But I am about to fulfil a duty, not a desire of vengeance of any kind. The cruelest revenge of all, I think, is scorn of revenge when it is in our power to take it. Perhaps I shall be the minister of your pleasures; who knows? Perhaps from this time forth, as you gracefully wear the tokens of disgrace by which society marks out the criminal, you may perforce learn something of the convict's sense of honor. And then, you will love!"

The Duchess sat listening; her meekness was unfeigned; it was no coquettish device. When she spoke at last, it was after a silence.

"Armand," she began, "it seems to me that when I resisted

love, I was obeying all the instincts of woman's modesty; I should not have looked for such reproaches from *you*. I was weak; you have turned all my weaknesses against me, and made so many crimes of them. How could you fail to understand that the curiosity of love might have carried me further than I ought to go; and that next morning I might be angry with myself, and wretched because I had gone too far? Alas! I sinned in ignorance. I was as sincere in my wrongdoing, I swear to you, as in my remorse. There was far more love for you in my severity than in my concessions. And besides, of what do you complain? I gave you my heart; that was not enough; you demanded, brutally, that I should give my person——"

"Brutally?" repeated Montriveau. But to himself he said, "If I once allow her to dispute over words, I am lost."

"Yes. You came to me as if I were one of those women. You showed none of the respect, none of the attentions of love. Had I not reason to reflect? Very well, I reflected.

you bind yourself for life, and know how easily a man snaps such ties? The bourgeoises, with whom you compared me just now, give themselves, but they struggle first. Very well —I struggled; but here I am!—Ah! God, he does not hear me!" she broke off, and wringing her hands, she cried out, "But I love you! I am yours!" and fell at Armand's feet.

"Yours! yours! my one and only master!"

Armand tried to raise her.

"Madame, it is too late! Antoinette cannot save the Duchesse de Langeais. I cannot believe in either. To-day you may give yourself; to-morrow, you may refuse. No power in earth or heaven can insure me the sweet constancy of love. All love's pledges lay in the past; and now nothing of that past exists."

The light behind the curtain blazed up so brightly, that the Duchess could not help turning her head; this time she distinctly saw the three masked figures.

"Armand," she said, "I would not wish to think ill of you. Why are those men there? What are you going to do to me?"

"Those men will be as silent as I myself with regard to the thing which is about to be done. Think of them simply as my hands and my heart. One of them is a surgeon——"

"A surgeon! Armand, my friend, of all things, suspense is the hardest to bear. Just speak; tell me if you wish for my life; I will give it to you, you shall not take it——"

"Then you did not understand me? Did I not speak just now of justice? To put an end to your misapprehensions," continued he, taking up a small steel object from the table, "I will now explain what I have decided with regard to you."

He held out a Lorraine cross, fastened to the tip of a steel rod.

"Two of my friends at this very moment are heating another cross, made on this pattern, red-hot. We are going to stamp it upon your forehead, here between the eyes, so that there will be no possibility of hiding the mark with diamonds, and so avoiding people's questions. In short, you shall bear

on your forehead the brand of infamy which your brothers the convicts wear on their shoulders. The pain is a mere trifle, but I feared a nervous crisis of some kind, of resistance——"

"Resistance?" she cried, clapping her hands for joy. "Oh no, no! I would have the whole world here to see. Ah, my Armand, brand her quickly, this creature of yours; brand her with your mark as a poor little trifle belonging to you. You asked for pledges of my love; here they are all in one. Ah! for me there is nothing but mercy and forgiveness and eternal happiness in this revenge of yours. When you have marked this woman with your mark, when you set your crimson brand on her, your slave in soul, you can never afterwards abandon her, you will be mine for evermore! When you cut me off from my kind, you make yourself responsible for my happiness, or you prove yourself base; and I know that you are noble and great! Why, when a woman loves, the brand of love is burned into her soul by her own will.—Come in, gentle-

of your heart. Good-bye. I feel that there is no faith in you left in me. You would torment me again; you would always be the Duchess, and—— But there, good-bye, we shall never understand each other.

"Now, what do you wish?" he continued, taking the tone of a master of the ceremonies—"to return home, or to go back to Mme. de Sérizy's ball? I have done all in my power to prevent any scandal. Neither your servants nor any one else can possibly know what has passed between us in the last quarter of an hour. Your servants have no idea that you have left the ballroom; your carriage never left Mme. de Sérizy's courtyard; your brougham may likewise be found in the court of your own hôtel. Where do you wish to be?"

"What do you counsel, Armand?"

"There is no Armand now, Mme. la Duchesse. We are strangers to each other."

"Then take me to the ball," she said, still curious to put Armand's power to the test. "Thrust a soul that suffered in the world, and must always suffer there, if there is no happiness for her now, down into hell again. And yet, oh my friend, I love you as your bourgeoises love; I love you so that I could come to you and fling my arms about your neck before all the world if you asked it of me. The hateful world has not corrupted me. I am young at least, and I have grown younger still. I am a child, yes, your child, your new creature. Ah! do not drive me forth out of my Eden!"

Armand shook his head.

"Ah! let me take something with me, if I go, some little thing to wear to-night on my heart," she said, taking possession of Armand's glove, which she twisted into her handkerchief

"No, I am *not* like all those depraved women. You do not know the world, and so you cannot know my worth. You shall know it now! There are women who sell themselves for money; there are others to be gained by gifts, it is a vile world! Oh, I wish I were a simple bourgeoise, a working girl, if you would rather have a woman beneath you than a woman

whose devotion is accompanied by high rank, as men count it. Oh, my Armand, there are noble, high, and chaste and pure natures among us; and then they are lovely indeed. I would have all nobleness that I might offer it all up to you. Misfortune willed that I should be a duchess; I would I were a royal princess, that my offering might be complete. I would be a grisette for you, and a queen for every one besides."

He listened, damping his cigar with his lips.

"You will let me know when you wish to go," he said.

"But I should like to stay——"

"That is another matter!"

"Stay, that was badly rolled," she cried, seizing on a cigar and devouring all that Armand's lips had touched.

"Do you smoke?"

"Oh, what would I not do to please you?"

"Very well. Go, madame."

"I will obey you," she answered, with tears in her eyes.

"You must be blindfolded; you must not see a glimpse of

Mme. de Langeais, rejoicing in this power of speech, was glad to let him know all; but he was inflexible; his hand was passive in reply to the questionings of her hand.

At length, after some journey made together, Armand bade her go forward; the opening was doubtless narrow, for as she went she felt that his hand protected her dress. His care touched her; it was a revelation surely that there was a little love still left; yet it was in some sort a farewell, for Montriveau left her without a word. The air was warm; the Duchess, feeling the heat, opened her eyes, and found herself standing by the fire in the Comtesse de Sérizy's boudoir. She was alone. Her first thought was for her disordered toilette; in a moment she had adjusted her dress and restored her picturesque coiffure.

"Well, dear Antoinette, we have been looking for you everywhere." It was the Comtesse de Sérizy who spoke as she opened the door.

"I came here to breathe," said the Duchess; "it is unbearably hot in the rooms."

"People thought that you had gone; but my brother Ronquerolles told me that your servants were waiting for you."

"I am tired out, dear, let me stay and rest here for a minute," and the Duchess sat down on the sofa.

"Why, what is the matter with you? You are shaking from head to foot!"

The Marquis de Ronquerolles came in.

"Mme. la Duchesse, I was afraid that something might have happened. I have just come across your coachman, the man is as tipsy as all the Swiss in Switzerland."

The Duchess made no answer; she was looking round the room, at the chimney-piece and the tall mirrors, seeking the trace of an opening. Then with an extraordinary sensation she recollected that she was again in the midst of the gaiety of the ballroom after that terrific scene which had changed the whole course of her life. She began to shiver violently.

"M. de Montriveau's prophecy has shaken my nerves," she said. "It was a joke, but still I will see whether his axe from

London will haunt me even in my sleep. So good-bye, dear.—Good-bye, M. le Marquis."

As she went through the rooms she was beset with inquiries and regrets. Her world seemed to have dwindled now that she, its queen, had fallen so low, was so diminished. And what, moreover, were these men compared with him whom she loved with all her heart; with the man grown great by all that she had lost in stature? The giant had regained the height that he had lost for a while, and she exaggerated it perhaps beyond measure. She looked, in spite of herself, at the servant who had attended her to the ball. He was fast asleep.

"Have you been here all the time?" she asked.

"Yes, madame."

As she took her seat in her carriage she saw, in fact, that her coachman was drunk—so drunk, that at any other time she would have been afraid; but after a great crisis in life, fear loses its appetite for common food. She reached home, at any rate, without accident; but even there she felt a change

and not an end; unfaithfulness may give pain, but the bond is not less close; the soul is neither more nor less ardent or troubled, but happy at every moment; in short, the divine breath of desire spreading from end to end of the immensity of Time steeps it all for us in the selfsame hue; life takes the tint of the unclouded heaven. But Passion is the foreshadowing of Love, and of that Infinite to which all suffering souls aspire. Passion is a hope that may be cheated. Passion means both suffering and transition. Passion dies out when hope is dead. Men and women may pass through this experience many times without dishonor, for it is so natural to spring towards happiness; but there is only one love in a lifetime. All discussions of sentiment ever conducted on paper or by word of mouth may therefore be resumed by two questions—"Is it passion? Is it love?" So, since love comes into existence only through the intimate experience of the bliss which gives it lasting life, the Duchess was beneath the yoke of passion as yet; and as she knew the fierce tumult, the unconscious calculations, the fevered cravings, and all that is meant by that word *passion*—she suffered. Through all the trouble of her soul there rose eddying gusts of tempest, raised by vanity or self-love, or pride or a high spirit; for all these forms of egoism make common cause together.

She had said to this man, "I love you; I am yours!" Was it possible that the Duchesse de Langeais should have uttered those words—in vain? She must either be loved now or play her part of queen no longer. And then she felt the loneliness of the luxurious couch where pleasure had never yet set his glowing feet; and over and over again, while she tossed and writhed there, she said, "I want to be loved."

But the belief that she still had in herself gave her hope of success. The Duchess might be piqued, the vain Parisienne might be humiliated; but the woman saw glimpses of wedded happiness, and imagination, avenging the time lost for nature, took a delight in kindling the inextinguishable fire in her veins. She all but attained to the sensations of love; for amid her poignant doubt whether she was loved in return, she

felt glad at heart to say to herself, "I love him!" As for her scruples, religion, and the world she could trample them under foot! Montriveau was her religion now. She spent the next day in a state of moral torpor, troubled by a physical unrest, which no words could express. She wrote letters and tore them all up, and invented a thousand impossible fancies.

When M. de Montriveau's usual hour arrived, she tried to think that he would come, and enjoyed the feeling of expectation. Her whole life was concentrated in the single sense of hearing. Sometimes she shut her eyes, straining her ears to listen through space, wishing that she could annihilate everything that lay between her and her lover, and so establish that perfect silence which sounds may traverse from afar. In her tense self-concentration, the ticking of the clock grew hateful to her; she stopped its ill-omened garrulity. The twelve strokes of midnight sounded from the drawing-room.

"Ah, God!" she cried, "to see him here would be happiness. And yet, it is not so very long since he came here, brought by

with M. de Montriveau? He is not to be seen at your house now."

The Countess laughed. "So he does not come here either?" she returned. "He is not to be seen anywhere, for that matter. He is interested in some woman, no doubt."

"I used to think that the Marquis de Ronquerolles was one of his friends——" the Duchess began sweetly.

"I have never heard my brother say that he was acquainted with him."

Mme. de Langeais did not reply. Mme. de Sérizy concluded from the Duchess' silence that she might apply the scourge with impunity to a discreet friendship which she had seen, with bitterness of soul, for a long time past.

"So you miss that melancholy personage, do you? I have heard most extraordinary things of him. Wound his feelings, he never comes back, he forgives nothing; and, if you love him, he keeps you in chains. To everything that I said of him, one of those that praise him sky-high would always answer, 'He knows how to love!' People are always telling me that Montriveau would give up all for his friend; that his is a great nature. Pooh! society does not want such tremendous natures. Men of that stamp are all very well at home; let them stay there and leave us to our pleasant littlenesses. What do you say, Antoinette?"

Woman of the world though she was, the Duchess seemed agitated, yet she replied in a natural voice that deceived her fair friend:

"I am sorry to miss him. I took a great interest in him, and promised to myself to be his sincere friend. I like great natures, dear friend, ridiculous though you may think it. To give oneself to a fool is a clear confession, is it not, that one is governed wholly by one's senses?"

Mme. de Sérizy's "preferences" had always been for commonplace men; her lover at the moment, the Marquis d'Aiglemont, was a fine, tall man.

After this, the Countess soon took her departure, you may be sure. Mme. de Langeais saw hope in Armand's withdrawal

from the world; she wrote to him at once; it was a humble, gentle letter, surely it would bring him if he loved her still. She sent her footman with it next day. On the servant's return, she asked whether he had given the letter to M. de Montriveau himself, and could not restrain the movement of joy at the affirmative answer. Armand was in Paris! He stayed alone in his house; he did not go out into society! So she was loved! All day long she waited for an answer that never came. Again and again, when impatience grew unbearable, Antoinette found reasons for his delay. Armand felt embarrassed; the reply would come by post; but night came, and she could not deceive herself any longer. It was a dreadful day, a day of pain grown sweet, of intolerable heart-throbs, a day when the heart squanders the very forces of life in riot.

Next day she sent for an answer.

"M. le Marquis sent word that he would call on Mme. la Duchesse," reported Julien.

She fled lest her happiness should be seen in her face, and

The Duchess learned the joys of this new life of hers through the rapture with which she received the scourgings of love. As this change wrought in her, she saw other destinies before her, and a better meaning in the things of life. As she hurried to her dressing-room, she understood what studied adornment and the most minute attention to her toilet mean when these are undertaken for love's sake and not for vanity. Even now this making ready helped her to bear the long time of waiting. A relapse of intense agitation set in when she was dressed; she passed through nervous paroxysms brought on by the dreadful power which sets the whole mind in ferment. Perhaps that power is only a disease, though the pain of it is sweet. The Duchess was dressed and waiting at two o'clock in the afternoon. At half-past eleven that night M. de Montriveau had not arrived. To try to give an idea of the anguish endured by a woman who might be said to be the spoiled child of civilization, would be to attempt to say how many imaginings the heart can condense into one thought. As well endeavor to measure the forces expended by the soul in a sigh whenever the bell rang; to estimate the drain of life when a carriage rolled past without stopping, and left her prostrate.

"Can he be playing with me?" she said, as the clocks struck midnight.

She grew white; her teeth chattered; she struck her hands together and leaped up and crossed the boudoir, recollecting as she did so how often he had come thither without a summons. But she resigned herself. Had she not seen him grow pale, and start up under the stinging barbs of her irony? Then Mme. de Langeais felt the horror of the woman's appointed lot: a man's is the active part, a woman must wait passively when she loves. If a woman goes beyond her beloved, she makes a mistake which few men can forgive; almost every man would feel that a woman lowers herself by this piece of angelic flattery. But Armand's was a great nature; he surely must be one of the very few who can repay such exceeding love by love that lasts for ever.

"Well, I will make the advance," she told herself, as she tossed on her bed and found no sleep there; "I will go to him. I will not weary myself with holding out a hand to him, but I will hold it out. A man of a thousand will see a promise of love and constancy in every step that a woman takes towards him. Yes, the angels must come down from heaven to reach men; and I wish to be an angel for him."

Next day she wrote. It was a billet of the kind in which the intellects of the ten thousand Sévignés that Paris now can number particularly excel. And yet only a Duchesse de Langeais, brought up by Mme. la Princesse de Blamont-Chauvry, could have written that delicious note; no other woman could complain without lowering herself; could spread wings in such a flight without draggling her pinions in humiliation; rise gracefully in revolt; scold without giving offence; and pardon without compromising her personal dignity.

Julien went with the note. Julien, like his kind, was the victim of love's marches and countermarches.

of love, the smart of wounded pride, the continual prick of the only scorn that could touch her, the yearnings towards joy that she craved with a vain continual longing—all these things told upon her, mind and body; all the forces of her nature were stimulated to no purpose. She was paying the arrears of her life of make-believe.

She went out at last to a review. M. de Montriveau was to be there. For the Duchess, on the balcony of the Tuileries with the Royal Family, it was one of those festival days that are long remembered. She looked supremely beautiful in her languor; she was greeted with admiration in all eyes. It was Montriveau's presence that made her so fair. Once or twice they exchanged glances. The General came almost to her feet in all the glory of that soldier's uniform, which produces an effect upon the feminine imagination to which the most prudish will confess. When a woman is very much in love, and has not seen her lover for two months, such a swift moment must be something like the phase of a dream when the eyes embrace a world that stretches away for ever. Only women or young men can imagine the dull, frenzied hunger in the Duchess' eyes. As for older men, if during the paroxysms of early passion in youth they had experience of such phenomena of nervous power; at a later day it is so completely forgotten that they deny the very existence of the luxuriant ecstasy—the only name that can be given to these wonderful intuitions. Religious ecstasy is the aberration of a soul that has shaken off its bonds of flesh; whereas in amorous ecstasy all the forces of soul and body are embraced and blended in one. If a woman falls a victim to the tyrannous frenzy before which Mme. de Langeais was forced to bend, she will take one decisive resolution after another so swiftly that it is impossible to give account of them. Thought after thought rises and flits across her brain, as clouds are whirled by the wind across the gray veil of mist that shuts out the sun. Thenceforth the facts reveal all. And the facts are these.

The day after the review, Mme. de Langeais sent her carriage and liveried servants to wait at the Marquis de Montri-

veau's door from eight o'clock in the morning till three in the afternoon. Armand lived in the Rue de Tournon, a few steps away from the Chamber of Peers, and that very day the House was sitting; but long before the peers returned to their palaces, several people had recognized the Duchess' carriage and liveries. The first of these was the Baron de Maulincour. That young officer had met with disdain from Mme. de Langeais and a better reception from Mme. de Sérizy; he betook himself at once therefore to his mistress, and under seal of secrecy told her of this strange freak.

In a moment the news was spread with telegraphic speed through all the coteries in the Faubourg Saint-Germain; it reached the Tuileries and the Élysée-Bourbon; it was the sensation of the day, the matter of all the talk from noon till night. Almost everywhere the women denied the facts, but in such a manner that the report was confirmed; the men one and all believed it, and manifested a most indulgent interest in Mme. de Langeais. Some among them threw the blame on

cited young men rushed about on horseback to make sure that the carriage was standing in the Rue de Tournon, and the Duchess in consequence was beyond a doubt in M. de Montriveau's rooms, Mme. de Langeais, with heavy throbbing pulses, was lying hidden away in her boudoir. And Armand? —he had been out all night, and at that moment was walking with M. de Marsay in the Gardens of the Tuileries. The elder members of Mme. de Langeais' family were engaged in calling upon one another, arranging to read her a homily and to hold a consultation as to the best way of putting a stop to the scandal.

At three o'clock, therefore, M. le Duc de Navarreins, the Vidame de Pamiers, the old Princesse de Blamont-Chauvry, and the Duc de Grandlieu were assembled in Mme. la Duchesse de Langeais' drawing-room. To them, as to all curious inquirers, the servants said that their mistress was not at home; the Duchess had made no exceptions to her orders. But these four personages shone conspicuous in that lofty sphere, of which the revolutions and hereditary pretensions are solemnly recorded year by year in the *Almanach de Gotha*, wherefore without some slight sketch of each of them this picture of society were incomplete.

The Princesse de Blamont-Chauvry, in the feminine world, was a most poetic wreck of the reign of Louis Quinze. In her beautiful prime, so it was said, she had done her part to win for that monarch his appellation of *le Bien-aimé*. Of her past charms of feature, little remained save a remarkably prominent slender nose, curved like a Turkish scimitar, now the principal ornament of a countenance that put you in mind of an old white glove. Add a few powdered curls, high-heeled pantoufles, a cap with upstanding loops of lace, black mittens, and a decided taste for *ombre*. But to do full justice to the lady, it must be said that she appeared in low-necked gowns of an evening (so high an opinion of her ruins had she), wore long gloves, and raddled her cheeks with Martin's classic rouge. An appalling amiability in her wrinkles, a prodigious brightness in the old lady's eyes, a profound dig-

nity in her whole person, together with the triple barbed wit of her tongue, and an infallible memory in her head, made of her a real power in the land. The whole Cabinet des Chartes was entered in duplicate on the parchment of her brain. She knew all the genealogies of every noble house in Europe—princes, dukes, and counts—and could put her hand on the last descendants of Charlemagne in the direct line. No usurpation of title could escape the Princesse de Blamont-Chauvry.

Young men who wished to stand well at Court, ambitious men, and young married women paid her assiduous homage. Her salon set the tone of the Faubourg Saint-Germain. The words of this Talleyrand in petticoats were taken as final decrees. People came to consult her on questions of etiquette or usages, or to take lessons in good taste. And, in truth, no other old woman could put back her snuff-box in her pocket as the Princess could; while there was a precision and a grace about the movements of her skirts when she sat down or

that they had not seen. Altogether, his person was a perfect model of aristocratic outline, slim and slender, supple and agreeable. He seemed as if he could be pliant or rigid at will, and twist and bend, or rear his head like a snake.

The Duc de Navarreins was pacing up and down the room with the Duc de Grandlieu. Both were men of fifty-six or thereabouts, and still hale; both were short, corpulent, flourishing, somewhat florid-complexioned men with jaded eyes, and lower lips that had begun to hang already. But for an exquisite refinement of accent, an urbane courtesy, and an ease of manner that could change in a moment to insolence, a superficial observer might have taken them for a couple of bankers. Any such mistake would have been impossible, however, if the listener could have heard them converse, and seen them on their guard with men whom they feared, vapid and commonplace with their equals, slippery with the inferiors whom courtiers and statesmen know how to tame by a tactful word, or to humiliate with an unexpected phrase.

Such were the representatives of the great noblesse that determined to perish rather than submit to any change. It was a noblesse that deserved praise and blame in equal measure; a noblesse that will never be judged impartially until some poet shall rise to tell how joyfully the nobles obeyed the King though their heads fell under a Richelieu's axe, and how deeply they scorned the guillotine of '89 as a foul revenge.

Another noticeable trait in all the four was a thin voice that agreed peculiarly well with their ideas and bearing. Among themselves, at any rate, they were on terms of perfect equality. None of them betrayed any sign of annoyance over the Duchess' escapade, but all of them had learned at Court to hide their feelings.

And here, lest critics should condemn the puerility of the opening of the forthcoming scene, it is perhaps as well to remind the reader that Locke, once happening to be in the company of several great lords, renowned no less for their wit than for their breeding and political consistency, wickedly amused himself by taking down their conversation by some shorthand

process of his own; and afterwards, when he read it over to them to see what they could make of it, they all burst out laughing. And, in truth, the tinsel jargon which circulates among the upper ranks in every country yields mighty little gold to the crucible when washed in the ashes of literature or philosophy. In every rank of society (some few Parisian salons excepted) the curious observer finds folly a constant quantity beneath a more or less transparent varnish. Conversation with any substance in it is a rare exception, and bœotianism is current coin in every zone. In the higher regions they must perforce talk more, but to make up for it they think the less. Thinking is a tiring exercise, and the rich like their lives to flow by easily and without effort. It is by comparing the fundamental matter of jests, as you rise in the social scale from the street-boy to the peer of France, that the observer arrives at a true comprehension of M. de Talleyrand's maxim, "The manner is everything;" an elegant rendering of the legal axiom, "The form is of more consequence

keeping an annuity. She made over the Guébriant estate
: niece, Mme. de Soulanges, subject to a yearly charge."
will be a great loss for society. She was a kind woman.
'amily will miss her; her experience and advice carried
t. Her son Marigny is an amiable man; he has a sharp
e can talk. He is pleasant, very pleasant. Pleasant? oh,
no one can deny, but—ill regulated to the last degree.
and yet it is an extraordinary thing, he is very acute.
as dining at the club the other day with that moneyed
sée-d'Antin set. Your uncle (he always goes there for
me of cards) found him there to his astonishment, and
if he was a member. 'Yes,' said he, 'I don't go into
y now; I am living among the bankers.'—You know
added the Marquis, with a meaning smile.
o," said the Duke.
e is smitten with that little Mme. Keller, Gondreville's
ter; she is only lately married, and has a great vogue,
ay, in that set."
ell, Antoinette does not find time heavy on her hands,
ms," remarked the Vidame.
y affection for that little woman has driven me to find
ular pastime," replied the Princess, as she returned her
box to her pocket.
ear aunt, I am extremely vexed," said the Duke, stop-
short in his walk. "Nobody but one of Bonaparte's men
ask such an indecorous thing of a woman of fashion.
en ourselves, Antoinette might have made a better
."
he Montriveaus are a very old family and very well con-
l, my dear," replied the Princess; "they are related to all
oblest houses of Burgundy. If the Dulmen branch of
rschoot Rivaudoults should come to an end in Galicia,
Montriveaus would succeed to the Arschoot title and es-
They inherit through their great-grandfather."
re you sure?"
know it better than this Montriveau's father did. I
im about it, I used to see a good deal of him; and, Chev-

alier of several orders though he was, he only laughed; he was an encyclopædist. But his brother turned the relationship to good account during the emigration. I have heard it said that his northern kinsfolk were most kind in every way——"

"Yes, to be sure The Comte de Montriveau died at St. Petersburg," said the Vidame. "I met him there. He was a big man with an incredible passion for oysters."

"How ever many did he eat?" asked the Duc de Grandlieu.

"Ten dozen every day."

"And did they not disagree with him?"

"Not the least bit in the world."

"Why, that is extraordinary! Had he neither the stone nor gout, nor any other complaint, in consequence?"

"No; his health was perfectly good, and he died through an accident."

"By accident! Nature prompted him to eat oysters, so probably he required them; for up to a certain point our predominant tastes are conditions of our existence."

"I am of your opinion," said the Princess, with a smile

ception day—and you must see that we all rally round her and give the lie to this absurd rumor. There are hundreds of ways of explaining things; and if the Marquis de Montriveau is a gentleman, he will come to our assistance. We will bring these children to listen to reason——"

"But, dear aunt, it is not easy to tell M. de Montriveau the truth to his face. He is one of Bonaparte's pupils, and he has a position. Why, he is one of the great men of the day; he is high up in the Guards, and very useful there. He has not a spark of ambition. He is just the man to say, 'Here is my commission, leave me in peace,' if the King should say a word that he did not like."

"Then, pray, what are his opinions?"

"Very unsound."

"Really," sighed the Princess, "the King is, as he always has been, a Jacobin under the Lilies of France."

"Oh! not quite so bad," said the Vidame.

"Yes; I have known him for a long while. The man that pointed out the Court to his wife on the occasion of her first state dinner in public with, 'These are our people,' could only be a black-hearted scoundrel. I can see Monsieur exactly the same as ever in the King. The bad brother who voted so wrongly in his department of the Constituent Assembly was sure to compound with the Liberals and allow them to argue and talk. This philosophical cant will be just as dangerous now for the younger brother as it used to be for the elder; this fat man with the little mind is amusing himself by creating difficulties, and how his successor is to get out of them I do not know; he holds his younger brother in abhorrence; he would be glad to think as he lay dying, 'He will not reign very long——'"

"Aunt, he is the King, and I have the honor to be in his service——"

"But does your post take away your right of free speech, my dear? You come of quite as good a house as the Bourbons. If the Guises had shown a little more resolution, His Majesty would be a nobody at this day. It is time I went

out of this world, the noblesse is dead. Yes, it is all over with you, my children," she continued, looking as she spoke at the Vidame. "What has my niece done that the whole town should be talking about her? She is in the wrong; I disapprove of her conduct, a useless scandal is a blunder; that is why I still have my doubts about this want of regard for appearances; I brought her up, and I know that——"

Just at that moment the Duchess came out of her boudoir. She had recognized her aunt's voice and heard the name of Montriveau. She was still in her loose morning-gown; and even as she came in, M. de Grandlieu, looking carelessly out of the window, saw his niece's carriage driving back along the street. The Duke took his daughter's face in both hands and kissed her on the forehead. "So, dear girl," he said, "you do not know what is going on?"

"Has anything extraordinary happened, father dear?"

"Why, all Paris believes that you are with M. de Montri-

mpromised your husband and your position. Still, we will rrange to make everything right."

"But, dear aunt, I do not wish to make it right at all. It my wish that all Paris should say that I was with M. de lontriveau this morning. If you destroy that belief, howver ill grounded it may be, you will do me a singular disrvice."

"Do you really wish to ruin yourself, child, and to grieve our family?"

"My family, father, unintentionally condemned me to irparable misfortune when they sacrificed me to family conderations. You may, perhaps, blame me for seeking allevicons, but you will certainly feel for me."

"After all the endless pains you take to settle your daughrs suitably!" muttered M. de Navarreins, addressing the idame.

The Princess shook a stray grain of snuff from her skirts. My dear little girl," she said, "be happy, if you can. We re not talking of troubling your felicity, but of reconciling with social usages. We all of us here assembled know that arriage is a defective institution tempered by love. But hen you take a lover, is there any need to make your bed in e Place du Carrousel? See now, just be a bit reasonable, nd hear what we have to say."

"I am listening."

"Mme. la Duchesse," began the Duc de Grandlieu, "if it ere any part of an uncle's duty to look after his nieces, he ght to have a position; society would owe him honors and reards and a salary, exactly as if he were in the King's service. I am not here to talk about my nephew, but of your own inrests. Let us look ahead a little. If you persist in making a andal—I have seen the animal before, and I own that I ave no great liking for him—Langeais is stingy enough, and e does not care a rap for any one but himself; he will have a paration; he will stick to your money, and leave you poor, nd consequently you will be a nobody. The income of a hunred thousand livres that you have just inherited from your

maternal great-aunt will go to pay for his mistress' amusements. You will be bound and gagged by the law; you will have to say Amen to all these arrangements. Suppose M. de Montriveau leaves you—dear me! do not let us put ourselves in a passion, my dear niece; a man does not leave a woman while she is young and pretty; still, we have seen so many pretty women left disconsolate, even among princesses, that you will permit the supposition, an all but impossible supposition I quite wish to believe—— Well, suppose that he goes, what will become of you without a husband? Keep well with your husband as you take care of your beauty; for beauty, after all, is a woman's parachute, and a husband also stands between you and worse. I am supposing that you are happy and loved to the end, and I am leaving unpleasant or unfortunate events altogether out of the reckoning. This being so, fortunately or unfortunately, you may have children. What are they to be? Montriveaus? Very well; they certainly will

ut the Revolution. When a man cannot lay the blame on father or mother, he holds God responsible for his hard . In short, dear child, we are here to open your eyes. I l say all I have to say in a few words, on which you had ter meditate: A woman ought never to put her husband the right."

"Uncle, so long as I cared for nobody, I could calculate; I ked at interests then, as you do; now, I can only feel."

"But, my dear little girl," remonstrated the Vidame, "life simply a complication of interests and feelings; to be ppy, more particularly in your position, one must try to ncile one's feelings with one's interests. A grisette may e according to her fancy, that is intelligible enough, but u have a pretty fortune, a family, a name and a place at urt, and you ought not to fling them out of the window. d what have we been asking you to do to keep them all?— manœuvre carefully instead of falling foul of social conitions. Lord! I shall very soon be eighty years old, and I mot recollect, under any régime, a love worth the price it you are willing to pay for the love of this lucky young n."

The Duchess silenced the Vidame with a look; if Montrim could have seen that glance, he would have forgiven all.

"It would be very effective on the stage," remarked the Duc Grandlieu, "but it all amounts to nothing when your nture and position and independence is concerned. You not grateful, my dear niece. You will not find many fams where the relatives have courage enough to teach the wism gained by experience, and to make rash young heads en to reason. Renounce your salvation in two minutes, if pleases you to damn yourself; well and good; but reflect ll beforehand when it comes to renouncing your income. I ow of no confessor who remits the pains of poverty. I have ight, I think, to speak in this way to you; for if you are ned, I am the one person who can offer you a refuge. I almost an uncle to Langeais, and I alone have a right to t him in the wrong."

The Duc de Navarreins roused himself from painful reflections.

"Since you speak of feeling, my child," he said, "let me remind you that a woman who bears your name ought to be moved by sentiments which do not touch ordinary people. Can you wish to give an advantage to the Liberals, to those Jesuits of Robespierre's that are doing all they can to vilify the noblesse? Some things a Navarreins cannot do without failing in duty to his house. You would not be alone in your dishonor——"

"Come, come!" said the Princess. "Dishonor? Do not make such a fuss about the journey of an empty carriage, children, and leave me alone with Antoinette. All three of you come and dine with me. I will undertake to arrange matters suitably. You men understand nothing; you are beginning to talk sourly already, and I have no wish to see a quarrel between you and my dear child. Do me the pleasure to go."

chief. The philosophists—the nobodies whom we admitted into our salons—had no more gratitude or sense of decency than to make an inventory of our hearts, to traduce us one and all, and to rail against the age by way of a return for our kindness. The people are not in a position to judge of anything whatsoever; they looked at the facts, not at the form. But the men and women of those times, my heart, were quite as remarkable as at any other period of the Monarchy. Not one of your Werthers, none of your notabilities, as they are called, never a one of your men in yellow kid gloves and trousers that disguise the poverty of their legs, would cross Europe in the dress of a traveling hawker to brave the daggers of a Duke of Modena, and to shut himself up in the dressing-room of the Regent's daughter at the risk of his life. Not one of your little consumptive patients with their tortoise-shell eyeglasses would hide himself in a closet for six weeks, like Lauzun, to keep up his mistress' courage while she was lying in of her child. There was more passion in M. de Jaucourt's little finger than in your whole race of higglers that leave a woman to better themselves elsewhere! Just tell me where to find the page that would be cut in pieces and buried under the floor boards for one kiss on the Königsmark's gloved finger!

"Really, it would seem to-day that the rôles are exchanged, and women are expected to show their devotion for men. These modern gentlemen are worth less, and think more of themselves. Believe me, my dear, all these adventures that have been made public, and now are turned against our good Louis XV., were kept quite secret at first. If it had not been for a pack of poetasters, scribblers, and moralists, who hung about our waiting-women, and took down their slanders, our epoch would have appeared in literature as a well-conducted age. I am justifying the century and not its fringe. Perhaps a hundred women of quality were lost; but for every one, the rogues set down ten, like the gazettes after a battle when they count up the losses of the beaten side. And in any case I do not know that the Revolution and the Empire can re-

proach us; they were coarse, dull, licentious times. Faugh! it is revolting. Those are the brothels of French history.

"This preamble, my dear child," she continued after a pause, "brings me to the thing that I have to say. If you care for Montriveau, you are quite at liberty to love him at your ease, and as much as you can. I know by experience that, unless you are locked up (but locking people up is out of fashion now), you will do as you please; I should have done the same at your age. Only, sweetheart, I should not have given up my right to be the mother of future Ducs de Langeais. So mind appearances. The Vidame is right. No man is worth a single one of the sacrifices which we are foolish enough to make for their love. Put yourself in such a position that you may still be M. de Langeais' wife, in case you should have the misfortune to repent. When you are an old woman, you will be very glad to hear mass said at Court, and not in some provincial convent. Therein lies the whole question. A single imprudence means an allowance and a wander-

old. Come, now, do not vex him, or us, or any one else. I will undertake to satisfy everybody; but promise me not to permit yourself a single step henceforth until you have consulted me. Tell me all, and perhaps I may bring it all right again."

"Aunt, I promise——"

"To tell me everything?"

"Yes, everything. Everything that can be told."

"But, my sweetheart, it is precisely what cannot be told that I want to know. Let us understand each other thoroughly. Come, let me put my withered old lips on your beautiful forehead. No; let me do as I wish. I forbid you to kiss my bones. Old people have a courtesy of their own. . . . There, take me down to my carriage," she added, when she had kissed her niece.

"Then may I go to him in disguise, dear aunt?"

"Why—yes. The story can always be denied," said the old Princess.

This was the one idea which the Duchess had clearly grasped in the sermon. When Mme. de Chauvry was seated in the corner of her carriage, Mme. de Langeais bade her a graceful adieu and went up to her room. She was quite happy again.

"My person would have snared his heart; my aunt is right; a man cannot surely refuse a pretty woman when she understands how to offer herself."

That evening, at the Élysée-Bourbon, the Duc de Navarreins, M. de Pamiers, M. de Marsay, M. de Grandlieu, and the Duc de Maufrigneuse triumphantly refuted the scandals that were circulating with regard to the Duchesse de Langeais. So many officers and other persons had seen Montriveau walking in the Tuileries that morning, that the silly story was set down to chance, which takes all that is offered. And so, in spite of the fact that the Duchess' carriage had waited before Montriveau's door, her character became as clear and as spotless as Membrino's sword after Sancho had polished it up.

But, at two o'clock, M. de Ronquerolles passed Montriveau in a deserted alley, and said with a smile, "She is coming on,

is your Duchess. Go on, keep it up!" he added, and gave a significant cut of the riding whip to his mare, who sped off like a bullet down the avenue.

Two days after the fruitless scandal, Mme. de Langeais wrote to M. de Montriveau. That letter, like the preceding ones, remained unanswered. This time she took her own measures, and bribed M. de Montriveau's man, Auguste. And so at eight o'clock that evening she was introduced into Armand's apartment. It was not the room in which that secret scene had passed; it was entirely different. The Duchess was told that the General would not be at home that night. Had he two houses? The man would give no answer. Mme. de Langeais had bought the key of the room, but not the man's whole loyalty.

When she was left alone she saw her fourteen letters lying on an old-fashioned stand, all of them uncreased and unopened. He had not read them. She sank into an easy-chair, and for a while she lost consciousness. When she came

cousin," she said. "Ah! do not smile, I beg of you, when an unhappy woman has reached the lowest depths of wretchedness. You are a gentleman, and after the adventures of your youth you must feel some indulgence for women."

"None whatever," said he

"Indeed!"

"Everything is in their favor."

"Ah! Well, you are one of the inner family circle; possibly you will be the last relative, the last friend whose hand I shall press, so I can ask your good offices. Will you, dear Vidame, do me a service which I could not ask of my own father, nor of my uncle Grandlieu, nor of any woman? You cannot fail to understand. I beg of you to do my bidding, and then to forget what you have done, whatever may come of it. It is this: Will you take this letter and go to M. de Montriveau? will you see him yourself, give it into his hands, and ask him, as you men can ask things between yourselves—for you have a code of honor between man and man which you do not use with us, and a different way of regarding things between yourselves—ask him if he will read this letter? Not in your presence. Certain feelings men hide from each other. I give you authority to say, if you think it necessary to bring him, that it is a question of life or death for me. If he deigns——"

"*Deigns!*" repeated the Vidame.

"If he deigns to read it," the Duchess continued with dignity, "say one thing more. You will go to see him about five o'clock, for I know that he will dine at home to-day at that time. Very good. By way of answer he must come to see me. If, three hours afterwards, by eight o'clock, he does not leave his house, all will be over. The Duchesse de Langeais will have vanished from the world. I shall not be dead, dear friend, no, but no human power will ever find me again on this earth. Come and dine with me; I shall at least have one friend with me in the last agony. Yes, dear cousin, to-night will decide my fate; and whatever happens to me, I pass through an ordeal by fire. There! not a word. I will hear

nothing of the nature of comment or advice—— Let us chat and laugh together," she added, holding out a hand, which he kissed. "We will be like two gray-headed philosophers who have learned how to enjoy life to the last moment. I will look my best; I will be very enchanting for you. You perhaps will be the last man to set eyes on the Duchesse de Langeais."

The Vicomte bowed, took the letter, and went without a word. At five o'clock he returned. His cousin had studied to please him, and she looked lovely indeed. The room was gay with flowers as if for a festivity; the dinner was exquisite. For the gray-headed Vidame the Duchess displayed all the brilliancy of her wit; she was more charming than she had ever been before. At first the Vidame tried to look on all the preparations as a young woman's jest; but now and again the attempted illusion faded, the spell of his fair cousin's charm was broken. He detected a shudder caused by some kind of sudden dread, and once she seemed to listen

never recovers from those feelings. You will have no regrets. Dreadful though that thought may be, it will comfort me in my long sorrow. Regrets? Oh! my Armand, may I never know of them; if I thought that I had caused you a single regret—— But, no, I will not tell you what desolation I should feel. I should be living still, and I could not be your wife; it would be too late!

"Now that I have given myself wholly to you in thought, to whom else should I give myself?—to God. The eyes that you loved for a little while shall never look on another man's face; and may the glory of God blind them to all besides. I shall never hear human voices more since I heard yours—so gentle at the first, so terrible yesterday; for it seems to me that I am still only on the morrow of your vengeance. And now may the will of God consume me. Between His wrath and yours, my friend, there will be nothing left for me but a little space for tears and prayers.

"Perhaps you wonder why I write to you? Ah! do not think ill of me if I keep a gleam of hope, and give one last sigh to happy life before I take leave of it for ever. I am in a hideous position. I feel all the inward serenity that comes when a great resolution has been taken, even while I hear the last growlings of the storm. When you went out on that terrible adventure which so drew me to you Armand, you went from the desert to the oasis with a good guide to show you the way. Well, I am going out of the oasis into the desert, and you are a pitiless guide to me. And yet you only, my friend, can understand how melancholy it is to look back for the last time on happiness—to you, and you only, I can make moan without a blush. If you grant my entreaty, I shall be happy; if you are inexorable, I shall expiate the wrong that I have done. After all, it is natural, is it not, that a woman should wish to live, invested with all noble feelings, in her friend's memory? Oh! my one and only love, let her to whom you gave life go down into the tomb in the belief that she is great in your eyes. Your harshness led me to reflect; and now that I love you so, it seems to me that I am less

guilty than you think. Listen to my justification, I owe it to you; and you that are all the world to me, owe me at least a moment's justice.

"I have learned by my own anguish all that I made you suffer by my coquetry; but in those days I was utterly ignorant of love. *You* know what the torture is, and you mete it out to me! During those first eight months that you gave me you never roused any feeling of love in me. Do you ask why this was so, my friend? I can no more explain it than I can tell you why I love you now. Oh! certainly it flattered my vanity that I should be the subject of your passionate talk, and receive those burning glances of yours; but you left me cold. No, I was not a woman; I had no conception of womanly devotion and happiness. Who was to blame? You would have despised me, would you not, if I had given myself without the impulse of passion? Perhaps it is the highest height to which we can rise—to give all and receive no joy; perhaps there is no merit in yielding oneself to bliss that is

spair will protect my memory from all insult, and my end shall be worthy of my love. When you see me no more on earth, albeit I shall still be alive, you yourself will not think without a shudder of the woman who, in three hours' time, will live only to overwhelm you with her tenderness; a woman consumed by a hopeless love, and faithful—not to memories of past joys—but to a love that was slighted.

"The Duchesse de la Vallière wept for lost happiness and vanished power; but the Duchesse de Langeais will be happy that she may weep and be a power for you still. Yes, you will regret me. I see clearly that I was not of this world, and I thank you for making it clear to me.

"Farewell; you will never touch *my* axe. Yours was the executioner's axe, mine is God's; yours kills, mine saves. Your love was but mortal, it could not endure disdain or ridicule; mine can endure all things without growing weaker, it will last eternally. Ah! I feel a sombre joy in crushing you that believe yourself so great; in humbling you with the calm, indulgent smile of one of the least among the angels that lie at the feet of God, for to them is given the right and the power to protect and watch over men in His name. You have but felt fleeting desires, and while the poor nun will shed the light of her ceaseless and ardent prayer about you, she will shelter you all your life long beneath the wings of a love that has nothing of earth in it.

"I have a presentiment of your answer; our trysting place shall be—in heaven. Strength and weakness can both enter there, dear Armand; the strong and the weak are bound to suffer. This thought soothes the anguish of my final ordeal. So calm am I that I should fear that I had ceased to love you if I were not about to leave the world for your sake.

"ANTOINETTE."

"Dear Vidame," said the Duchess as they reached Montriveau's house, "do me the kindness to ask at the door whether he is at home."

The Vidame, obedient after the manner of the eighteenth

century to a woman's wish, got out, and came back to bring his cousin an affirmative answer that sent a shudder through her. She grasped his hand tightly in hers, suffered him to kiss her on either cheek, and begged him to go at once. He must not watch her movements nor try to protect her.

"But the people passing in the street," he objected.

"No one can fail in respect to me," she said. It was the last word spoken by the Duchess and the woman of fashion.

The Vidame went. Mme. de Langeais wrapped herself about in her cloak, and stood on the doorstep until the clocks struck eight. The last stroke died away. The unhappy woman waited ten, fifteen minutes; to the last she tried to see a fresh humiliation in the delay, then her faith ebbed. She turned to leave the fatal threshold.

"Oh, God!" the cry broke from her in spite of herself; it was the first word spoken by the Carmelite.

Montriveau and some of his friends were talking together. He tried to hasten them to a conclusion, but his clock was

en a great misfortune has happened, no doubt," re-
the Vidame, "and through your fault. I left the
ss at your door——"
ıen?"
a quarter to eight."
ɔd-evening," returned Montriveau, and he hurried home
the porter whether he had seen a lady standing on the
ɜp that evening.
s, my Lord Marquis, a handsome woman, who seemed
ıuch put out. She was crying like a Magdalen, but
ver made a sound, and stood as upright as a post.
ıt last she went, and my wife and I that were watching
ıile she could not hear us, heard her say, 'Oh, God!'
t it went to our hearts, asking your pardon, to hear
r it."
ıtriveau, in spite of all his firmness, turned pale at
'ew words. He wrote a few lines to Ronquerolles, sent
message at once, and went up to his rooms. Ronque-
came just about midnight.
ıand gave him the Duchess' letter to read.
ll?" asked Ronquerolles.
e was here at my door at eight o'clock; at a quarter-
ght she had gone. I have lost her, and I love her. Oh!
life were my own, I could blow my brains out."
ɔh, pooh! Keep cool," said Ronquerolles. "Duchesses
fly off like wagtails. She cannot travel faster than
eagues an hour, and to-morrow we will ride six.—Con-
it! Mme. de Langeais is no ordinary woman," he con-
. "To-morrow we will all of us mount and ride. The
will put us on her track during the day. She must have
age; angels of that sort have no wings. We shall find
ıether she is on the road or hidden in Paris. There
semaphore. We can stop her. You shall be happy.
ıy dear fellow, you have made a blunder, of which men
r energy are very often guilty. They judge others by
lves, and do not know the point when human nature
ray if you strain the cords too tightly. Why did you

not say a word to me sooner? I would have told you to be punctual. Good-bye till to-morrow," he added, as Montriveau said nothing. "Sleep if you can," he added, with a grasp of the hand.

But the greatest resources which society has ever placed at the disposal of statesmen, kings, ministers, bankers, or any human power, in fact, were all exhausted in vain. Neither Montriveau nor his friends could find any trace of the Duchess. It was clear that she had entered a convent. Montriveau determined to search, or to institute a search, for her through every convent in the world. He must have her, even at the cost of all the lives in a town. And in justice to this extraordinary man, it must be said that his frenzied passion awoke to the same ardor daily and lasted through five years. Only in 1829 did the Duke de Navarreins hear by chance that his daughter had traveled to Spain as Lady Julia Hopwood's maid, that she had left her service at Cadiz, and that Lady Julia never discovered that Mlle. Caroline was the illustrious

n with a romantic passion for the East, wished to make
ney to those lands. Montriveau's familiar knowledge
stern customs made him an invaluable traveling com-
, and at the entreaty of the rest he had joined the ex-
on; the Minister of War appointed him lieutenant-
l, and put him on the Artillery Commission to facilitate
parture.

nty-four hours later the brig lay to off the northwest
of an island within sight of the Spanish coast. She
een specially chosen for her shallow keel and light
ge, so that she might lie at anchor in safety half a
away from the reefs that secure the island from ap-
in this direction. If fishing vessels or the people on
and caught sight of the brig, they were scarcely likely
suspicious of her at once; and besides, it was easy to
reason for her presence without delay. Montriveau
l the flag of the United States before they came in
f the island, and the crew of the vessel were all Ameri-
ilors, who spoke nothing but English. One of M. de
iveau's companions took the men ashore in the ship's
oat, and made them so drunk at an inn in the little
hat they could not talk. Then he gave out that the
as manned by treasure-seekers, a gang of men whose
was well known in the United States; indeed, some
h writer had written a history of them. The presence
brig among the reefs was now sufficiently explained.
wners of the vessel, according to the self-styled boat-
mate, were looking for the wreck of a galleon which
red thereabouts in 1778 with a cargo of treasure from
. The people at the inn and the authorities asked no
questions.

and, and the devoted friends who were helping him
difficult enterprise, were all from the first of the opin-
at there was no hope of rescuing or carrying off Sister
a by force or stratagem from the side of the little
Wherefore these bold spirits, with one accord, deter-
to take the bull by the horns. They would make a way

to the convent at the most seeming inaccessible point; like General Lamarque, at the storming of Capri, they would conquer Nature. The cliff at the end of the island, a sheer block of granite, afforded even less hold than the rock of Capri. So it seemed at least to Montriveau, who had taken part in that incredible exploit, while the nuns in his eyes were much more redoubtable than Sir Hudson Lowe. To raise a hubbub over carrying off the Duchess would cover them with confusion. They might as well set siege to the town and convent, like pirates, and leave not a single soul to tell of their victory. So for them their expedition wore but two aspects. There should be a conflagration and a feat of arms that should dismay all Europe, while the motives of the crime remained unknown; or, on the other hand, a mysterious aerial descent which should persuade the nuns that the Devil himself had paid them a visit. They had decided upon the latter course in the secret council held before they left Paris, and subsequently everything had been done to insure the success of an

less; the law of that curve was a secret wrested from Nature by that faculty of observation in which nearly all human genius consists.

M. de Montriveau's companions were alone on board the vessel, and out of sight of every human eye. No one from the deck of a passing vessel could have discovered either the brig hidden among the reefs, or the men at work among the rocks; they lay below the ordinary range of the most powerful telescope. Eleven days were spent in preparation, before the Thirteen, with all their infernal power, could reach the foot of the cliffs. The body of the rock rose up straight from the sea to a height of thirty fathoms. Any attempt to climb the sheer wall of granite seemed impossible; a mouse might as well try to creep up the slippery sides of a plain china vase. Still there was a cleft, a straight line of fissure so fortunately placed that large blocks of wood could be wedged firmly into it at a distance of about a foot apart. Into these blocks the daring workers drove iron cramps, specially made for the purpose, with a broad iron bracket at the outer end, through which a hole had been drilled. Each bracket carried a light deal board which corresponded with a notch made in a pole that reached to the top of the cliffs, and was firmly planted in the beach at their feet. With ingenuity worthy of these men who found nothing impossible, one of their number, a skilled mathematician, had calculated the angle from which the steps must start; so that from the middle they rose gradually, like the sticks of a fan, to the top of the cliff, and descended in the same fashion to its base. That miraculously light, yet perfectly firm, staircase cost them twenty-two days of toil. A little tinder and the surf of the sea would destroy all trace of it for ever in a single night. A betrayal of the secret was impossible; and all search for the violators of the convent was doomed to failure.

At the top of the rock there was a platform with sheer precipice on all sides. The Thirteen, reconnoitering the ground with their glasses from the masthead, made certain that though the ascent was steep and rough, there would be

no difficulty in gaining the convent garden, where the trees were thick enough for a hiding-place. After such great efforts they would not risk the success of their enterprise, and were compelled to wait till the moon passed out of her last quarter.

For two nights Montriveau, wrapped in his cloak, lay out on the rock platform. The singing at vespers and matins filled him with unutterable joy. He stood under the wall to hear the music of the organ, listening intently for one voice among the rest. But in spite of the silence, the confused effect of music was all that reached his ears. In those sweet harmonies defects of execution are lost; the pure spirit of art comes into direct communication with the spirit of the hearer, making no demand on the attention, no strain on the power of listening. Intolerable memories awoke. All the love within him seemed to break into blossom again at the breath of that music; he tried to find auguries of happiness in the air. During the last night he sat with his eyes fixed

He stood under the wall to hear the music of the organ

TO NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

gracious in weakness, so strong with love? It is the ordinary nature that is attracted by young, smooth, pink-and-white beauty, or, in one word, by prettiness. In some faces love awakens amid the wrinkles carved by sorrow and the ruin made by melancholy; Montriveau could not but feel drawn to these. For cannot a lover, with the voice of a great longing, call forth a wholly new creature? a creature athrob with the life but just begun breaks forth for him alone, from the outward form that is fair for him, and faded for all the world besides. Does he not love two women?—One of them, as others see her, is pale and wan and sad; but the other, the unseen love that his heart knows, is an angel who understands life through feeling, and is adorned in all her glory only for love's high festivals.

The General left his post before sunrise, but not before he had heard voices singing together, sweet voices full of tenderness sounding faintly from the cell. When he came down to the foot of the cliffs where his friends were waiting, he told them that never in his life had he felt such enthralling bliss, and in the few words there was that unmistakable thrill of repressed strong feeling, that magnificent utterance which all men respect.

That night eleven of his devoted comrades made the ascent in the darkness. Each man carried a poniard, a provision of chocolate, and a set of house-breaking tools. They climbed the outer walls with scaling ladders, and crossed the cemetery of the convent. Montriveau recognized the long, vaulted gallery through which he went to the parlor, and remembered the windows of the room. His plans were made and adopted in a moment. They would effect an entrance through one of the windows in the Carmelite's half of the parlor, find their way along the corridors, ascertain whether the sisters' names were written on the doors, find Sister Theresa's cell, surprise her as she slept, and carry her off, bound and gagged. The programme presented no difficulties to men who combined bold-

ness and a convict's dexterity with the knowledge peculiar to men of the world, especially as they would not scruple to give a stab to insure silence.

In two hours the bars were sawn through. Three men stood on guard outside, and two inside the parlor. The rest, barefooted, took up their posts along the corridor. Young Henri de Marsay, the most dexterous man among them, disguised by way of precaution in a Carmelite's robe, exactly like the costume of the convent, led the way, and Montriveau came immediately behind him. The clock struck three just as the two men reached the dormitory cells. They soon saw the position. Everything was perfectly quiet. With the help of a dark lantern they read the names luckily written on every door, together with the picture of a saint or saints and the mystical words which every nun takes as a kind of motto for the beginning of her new life and the revelation of her last thought. Montriveau reached Sister Theresa's door and read the inscription, *Sub invocatione sanctæ matris Theresæ*, and

desire, the dead woman was carried into the convent
r, passed through the window, and lowered from the
before the Abbess, followed by the nuns, returned to
up Sister Theresa's body. The sister left in charge had
ndently left her post; there were secrets that she longed
now; and so busy was she ransacking the inner room,
she heard nothing, and was horrified when she came back
d that the body was gone. Before the women, in their
amazement, could think of making a search, the
ess had been lowered by a cord to the foot of the crags,
Montriveau's companions had destroyed all traces of
work. By nine that morning there was not a sign to
that either staircase or wire-cables had ever existed,
Sister Theresa's body had been taken on board. The brig
into the port to ship her crew, and sailed that day.
ntriveau, down in the cabin, was left alone with An-
tte de Navarreins. For some hours it seemed as if
lead face was transfigured for him by that unearthly
y which the calm of death gives to the body before it
hes.

ook here!" said Ronquerolles when Montriveau reap-
d on deck, "*that* was a woman once, now it is nothing.
s tie a cannon-ball to both feet and throw the body
oard; and if ever you think of her again, think of her
some book that you read as a boy."

es," assented Montriveau, "it is nothing now but a
n."

hat is sensible of you. Now, after this, have passions;
s for love, a man ought to know how to place it wisely;
only a woman's last love that can satisfy a man's first
'

EVEQUE, GENEVA, *January* 26, 1834.

III.

THE GIRL WITH THE GOLDEN EYES

To Eugène Delacroix, Painter.

E of those sights in which most horror is to be encoun-
ed is, surely, the general aspect of the Parisian populace—
people fearful to behold, gaunt, yellow, tawny. Is not
ris a vast field in perpetual turmoil from a storm of inter-
s beneath which are whirled along a crop of human beings,
o are, more often than not, reaped by death, only to be born
ain as pinched as ever, men whose twisted and contorted
es give out at every pore the instinct, the desire, the poi-
s with which their brains are pregnant; not faces so
ch as masks; masks of weakness, masks of strength, masks
misery, masks of joy, masks of hypocrisy; all alike worn
l stamped with the indelible signs of a panting cupidity?
at is it they want? Gold or pleasure? A few observations
on the soul of Paris may explain the causes of its cadav-
us physiognomy, which has but two ages—youth and de-
: youth, wan and colorless; decay, painted to seem young.
looking at this excavated people, foreigners, who are not
ne to reflection, experience at first a movement of disgust
ards the capital, that vast workshop of delights, from
ch, in a short time, they cannot even extricate them-
es, and where they stay willingly to be corrupted. A few
ds will suffice to justify physiologically the almost in-
al hue of Parisian faces, for it is not in mere sport that
has been called a hell. Take the phrase for truth.
re all is smoke and fire, everything gleams, crackles,
nes, evaporates, dies out, then lights up again, with shoot-

ing sparks, and is consumed. In no other country has life ever been more ardent or acute. The social nature, even in fusion, seems to say after each completed work: "Pass on to another!" just as Nature says herself. Like Nature herself, this social nature is busied with insects and flowers of a day—ephemeral trifles; and so, too, it throws up fire and flame from its eternal crater. Perhaps, before analyzing the causes which lend a special physiognomy to each tribe of this intelligent and mobile nation, the general cause should be pointed out which bleaches and discolors, tints with blue or brown individuals in more or less degree.

By dint of taking interest in everything, the Parisian ends by being interested in nothing. No emotion dominating his face, which friction has rubbed away, it turns gray like the faces of those houses upon which all kinds of dust and smoke have blown. In effect, the Parisian, with his indifference on the day for what the morrow will bring forth, lives like a child, whatever may be his age. He grumbles at everything,

gold and pleasure. Take those two words for a lantern, and explore that great stucco cage, that hive with its black gutters, and follow the windings of that thought which agitates, sustains, and occupies it! Consider! And, in the first place, examine the world which possesses nothing.

The artisan, the man of the proletariat, who uses his hands, his tongue, his back, his right arm, his five fingers, to live —well, this very man, who should be the first to economize his vital principle, outruns his strength, yokes his wife to some machine, wears out his child, and ties him to the wheel. The manufacturer—or I know not what secondary thread which sets in motion all these folk who with their foul hands mould and gild porcelain, sew coats and dresses, beat out iron, turn wood and steel, weave hemp, festoon crystal, imitate flowers, work woolen things, break in horses, dress harness, carve in copper, paint carriages, blow glass, corrode the diamond, polish metals, turn marble into leaves, labor on pebbles, deck out thought, tinge, bleach, or blacken everything—well, this middleman has come to that world of sweat and good-will, of study and patience, with promises of lavish wages, either in the names of the town's caprices or with the voice of the monster dubbed speculation. Thus, these *quadrumanes* set themselves to watch, work, and suffer, to fast, sweat, and bestir them. Then, careless of the future, greedy of pleasure, counting on their right arm as the painter on his palette, lords for one day, they throw their money on Mondays to the *cabarets* which gird the town like a belt of mud, haunts of the most shameless of the daughters of Venus, in which the periodical money of this people, as ferocious in their pleasures as they are calm at work, is squandered as it had been at play. For five days, then, there is no repose for this laborious portion of Paris! It is given up to actions which make it warped and rough, lean and pale, gush forth with a thousand fits of creative energy. And then its pleasure, its repose, are an exhausting debauch, swarthy and black with blows, white with intoxication, or yellow with indigestion. It lasts but two days, but it steals to-morrow's bread,

the week's soup, the wife's dress, the child's wretched rags. Men, born doubtless to be beautiful—for all creatures have a relative beauty—are enrolled from their childhood beneath the yoke of force, beneath the rule of the hammer, the chisel, the loom, and have been promptly vulcanized. Is not Vulcan, with his hideousness and his strength, the emblem of this strong and hideous nation—sublime in its mechanical intelligence, patient in its season, and once in a century terrible, inflammable as gunpowder, and ripe with brandy for the madness of revolution, with wits enough, in fine, to take fire at a captious word, which signifies to it always: Gold and Pleasure! If we comprise in it all those who hold out their hands for an alms, for lawful wages, or the five francs that are granted to every kind of Parisian prostitution, in short, for all money well or ill earned, this people numbers three hundred thousand individuals. Were it not for the *cabarets*, would not the Government be overturned every Tuesday? Happily, by Tuesday, this people is glutted, sleeps off its

lies his personality for the service, glory, and pleasure of
fellow-citizens. This man solves the problem of suffic-
at once to his amiable wife, to his hearth, to the *Consti-*
ionnel, to his office, to the National Guard, to the opera,
l to God; but, only in order that the *Constitutionnel,* his
ce, the National Guard, the opera, his wife, and God
y be changed into coin. In fine, hail to an irreproach-
e pluralist. Up every day at five o'clock, he traverses like
ird the space which separates his dwelling from the Rue
ntmartre. Let it blow or thunder, rain or snow, he is at
Constitutionnel, and waits there for the load of news-
ers which he has undertaken to distribute. He receives
s political bread with eagerness, takes it, bears it away.
nine o'clock he is in the bosom of his family, flings a
t to his wife, snatches a loud kiss from her, gulps down a
of coffee, or scolds his children. At a quarter to ten
puts in an appearance at the *Mairie.* There, stuck upon
tool, like a parrot on its perch, warmed by Paris town, he
isters until four o'clock, with never a tear or a smile, the
ths and births of an entire district. The sorrow, the
piness, of the parish flow beneath his pen—as the es-
ce of the *Constitutionnel* traveled before upon his shoul-
s. Nothing weighs upon him! He goes always straight
ore him, takes his patriotism ready made from the news-
er, contradicts no one, shouts or applauds with the world,
l lives like a bird. Two yards from his parish, in the
nt of an important ceremony, he can yield his place to an
istant, and betake himself to chant a requiem from a stall
the church of which on Sundays he is the fairest ornament,
ere his is the most imposing voice, where he distorts his
e mouth with energy to thunder out a joyous *Amen.* So
he chorister. At four o'clock, freed from his official
vitude, he reappears to shed joy and gaiety upon the most
nous shop in the city. Happy is his wife, he has no time
be jealous: he is a man of action rather than of senti-
nt. His mere arrival spurs the young ladies at the
nter; their bright eyes storm the customers; he expands

in the midst of all the finery, the lace and muslin kerchiefs, that their cunning hands have wrought. Or, again, more often still, before his dinner he waits on a client, copies the page of a newspaper, or carries to the doorkeeper some goods that have been delayed. Every other day, at six, he is faithful to his post. A permanent bass for the chorus, he betakes himself to the opera, prepared to become a soldier or an arab, prisoner, savage, peasant, spirit, camel's leg or lion, a devil or a genie, a slave or a eunuch, black or white; always ready to feign joy or sorrow, pity or astonishment, to utter cries that never vary, to hold his tongue, to hunt, or fight for Rome or Egypt, but always at heart—a huckster still.

At midnight he returns—a man, the good husband, the tender father; he slips into the conjugal bed, his imagination still afire with the illusive forms of the operatic nymphs, and so turns to the profit of conjugal love the world's depravities, the voluptuous curves of Taglioni's leg. And, finally, if he sleeps, he sleeps apace, and hurries through his

gaze. Often the son of a retail tradesman would fain
nething in the State.
ɔition of that sort carries on our thought to the sec-
arisian sphere. Go up one story, then, and descend to
tresol: or climb down from the attic and remain on the
floor; in fine, penetrate into the world which has pos-
s: the same result! Wholesale merchants, and their
people with small banking accounts and much in-
—rogues and catspaws, clerks old and young, sheriffs'
barristers' clerks, solicitors' clerks; in fine, all the
g, thinking, and speculating members of that lower
class which honeycombs the interests of Paris and
s over its granary, accumulates the coin, stores the
ts that the proletariat have made, preserves the fruits
South, the fishes, the wine from every sun-favored
hich stretches its hands over the Orient, and takes from
shawls that the Russ and the Turk despise; which har-
ven from the Indies; crouches down in expectation of
greedy of profit; which discounts bills, turns over and
s all kinds of securities, holds all Paris in its hand,
s over the fantasies of children, spies out the caprices
e vices of mature age, sucks money out of disease.
o, if they drink no brandy, like the artisan, nor wallow
mire of debauch, all equally abuse their strength, im-
ably strain their bodies and their minds alike, are
l away with desires, devastated with the swiftness of
ce. In their case the physical distortion is accom-
l beneath the whip of interests, beneath the scourge
itions which torture the educated portion of this mon-
city, just as in the case of the proletariat it is brought
by the cruel see-saw of the material elaborations per-
ly required from the despotism of the aristocratic
l." Here, too, then, in order to obey that universal
, pleasure or gold, they must devour time, hasten time,
ore than four-and-twenty hours in the day and night,
themselves, slay themselves, and purchase two years
ealthy repose with thirty years of old age. Only, the

working-man dies in hospital when the last term of his stunted growth expires; whereas the man of the middle class is set upon living, and lives on, but in a state of idiocy. You will meet him, with his worn, flat old face, with no light in his eyes, with no strength in his limbs, dragging himself with a dazed air along the boulevard—the belt of his Venus, of his beloved city. What was his want? The sabre of the National Guard, a permanent stock-pot, a decent plot in Père Lachaise, and, for his old age, a little gold honestly earned. *His* Monday is on Sunday, his rest a drive in a hired carriage —a country excursion during which his wife and children glut themselves merrily with dust or bask in the sun; his dissipation is at the restaurateur's, whose poisonous dinner has won renown, or at some family ball, where he suffocates till midnight. Some fools are surprised at the phantasmagoria of the monads which they see with the aid of the microscope in a drop of water; but what would Rabelais' Gargantua,—that misunderstood figure of an audacity so sublime,—what would

an age when they begin to show themselves on the balcony of the opera, in a *fiacre* at Longchamps; or, on sunny days, in faded clothes on the boulevards—the fruit of all this sowing. Respected by their neighbors, in good odor with the government, connected with the upper middle classes, Monsieur obtains at sixty-five the Cross of the Legion of Honor, and his daughter's father-in-law, a parochial mayor, invites him to his evenings. These life-long labors, then, are for the good of the children, whom these lower middle classes are inevitably driven to exalt. Thus each sphere directs all its efforts towards the sphere above it. The son of the rich grocer becomes a notary, the son of the timber merchant becomes a magistrate. No link is wanting in the chain, and everything stimulates the upward march of money.

Thus we are brought to the third circle of this hell, which, perhaps, will some day find its Dante. In this third social circle, a sort of Parisian belly, in which the interests of the town are digested, and where they are condensed into the form known as *business*, there moves and agitates, as by some acrid and bitter intestinal process, the crowd of lawyers, doctors, notaries, councillors, business men, bankers, big merchants, speculators, and magistrates. Here are to be found even more causes of moral and physical destruction than elsewhere. These people—almost all of them—live in unhealthy offices, in fetid ante-chambers, in little barred dens, and spend their days bowed down beneath the weight of affairs; they rise at dawn to be in time, not to be left behind, to gain all or not to lose, to overreach a man or his money, to open or wind up some business, to take advantage of some fleeting opportunity, to get a man hanged or set him free. They infect their horses, they overdrive and age and break them, like their own legs, before their time. Time is their tyrant: it fails them, it escapes them; they can neither expand it nor cut it short. What soul can remain great, pure, moral, and generous, and, consequently, what face retain its beauty in this depraving practice of a calling which compels one to bear the weight of the public sorrows, to analyze

equaled by its weakness and its licentiousness It is greedy of time to the point of wasting it. Seek in it for affection as little as for ideas. Its kisses conceal a profound indifference, its urbanity a perpetual contempt. It has no other fashion of love. Flashes of wit without profundity, a wealth of indiscretion, scandal, and, above all, commonplace. Such is the sum of its speech; but these happy fortunates pretend that they do not meet to make and repeat maxims in the manner of La Rochefoucauld as though there did not exist a mean, invented by the eighteenth century, between a superfluity and absolute blank. If a few men of character indulge in witticism, at once subtle and refined, they are misunderstood; soon, tired of giving without receiving, they remain at home, and leave fools to reign over their territory. This hollow life, this perpetual expectation of a pleasure which never comes, this permanent *ennui* and emptiness of soul, heart, and mind, the lassitude of the upper Parisian world, is reproduced on its features, and stamps its parch-

oracles which fatality sometimes allows. The *City of Paris* has her great mast, all of bronze, carved with victories, and for watchman—Napoleon. The barque may roll and pitch, but she cleaves the world, illuminates it through the hundred mouths of her tribunes, ploughs the seas of science, rides with full sail, cries from the height of her tops, with the voice of her scientists and artists: "Onward, advance! Follow me!" She carries a huge crew, which delights in adorning her with fresh streamers. Boys and urchins laughing in the rigging; ballast of heavy *bourgeoisie;* working-men and sailor-men touched with tar; in her cabins the lucky passengers; elegant midshipmen smoke their cigars leaning over the bulwarks; then, on the deck, her soldiers, innovators or ambitious, would accost every fresh shore, and shooting out their bright lights upon it, ask for glory which is pleasure, or for love which needs gold.

Thus the exorbitant movement of the proletariat, the corrupting influence of the interests which consume the two middle classes, the cruelties of the artist's thought, and the excessive pleasure which is sought for incessantly by the great, explain the normal ugliness of the Parisian physiognomy. It is only in the Orient that the human race presents a magnificent figure, but that is an effect of the constant calm affected by those profound philosophers with their long pipes, their short legs, their square contour, who despise and hold activity in horror, whilst in Paris the little and the great and the mediocre run and leap and drive, whipped on by an inexorable goddess, Necessity—the necessity for money, glory, and amusement. Thus, any face which is fresh and graceful and reposeful, any really young face, is in Paris the most extraordinary of exceptions; it is met with rarely. Should you see one there, be sure it belongs either to a young and ardent ecclesiastic or to some good abbé of forty with three chins; to a young girl of pure life such as is brought up in certain middle-class families; to a mother of twenty, still full of illusions, as she suckles her first-born; to a young man newly embarked from the provinces, and intrusted

to the care of some devout dowager who keeps him without a sou; or, perhaps, to some shop assistant who goes to bed at midnight wearied out with folding and unfolding calico, and rises at seven o'clock to arrange the window; often again to some man of science or poetry, who lives monastically in the embrace of a fine idea, who remains sober, patient, and chaste; else to some self-contented fool, feeding himself on folly, reeking of health, in a perpetual state of absorption with his own smile; or to the soft and happy race of loungers, the only folk really happy in Paris, which unfolds for them hour by hour its moving poetry.

Nevertheless, there is in Paris a proportion of privileged beings to whom this excessive movement of industries, interests, affairs, arts, and gold is profitable. These beings are women. Although they also have a thousand secret causes which, here more than elsewhere, destroy their physiognomy, there are to be found in the feminine world little happy colonies, who live in Oriental fashion and can preserve their

behold against the mass of other faces, worn, old, wrinkled, and grimacing. So women, too, admire such young people with that eager pleasure which men take in watching a pretty girl, elegant, gracious, and embellished with all the virginal charms with which our imagination pleases to adorn the perfect woman. If this hurried glance at the population of Paris has enabled us to conceive the rarity of a Raphaelesque face, and the passionate admiration which such an one must inspire at the first sight, the prime interest of our history will have been justified. *Quod erat demonstrandum*—if one may be permitted to apply scholastic formulæ to the science of manners.

Upon one of those fine spring mornings, when the leaves, although unfolded, are not yet green, when the sun begins to gild the roofs, and the sky is blue, when the population of Paris issues from its cells to swarm along the boulevards, glides like a serpent of a thousand coils through the Rue de la Paix towards the Tuileries, saluting the hymeneal magnificence which the country puts on; on one of these joyous days, then, a young man as beautiful as the day itself, dressed with taste, easy of manner—to let out the secret he was a love-child, the natural son of Lord Dudley and the famous Marquise de Vordac—was walking in the great avenue of the Tuileries. This Adonis, by name Henri de Marsay, was born in France, when Lord Dudley had just married the young lady, already Henri's mother, to an old gentleman called M. de Marsay. This faded and almost extinguished butterfly recognized the child as his own in consideration of the life interest in a fund of a hundred thousand francs definitively assigned to his putative son; a generosity which did not cost Lord Dudley too dear. French funds were worth at that time seventeen francs, fifty centimes. The old gentleman died without having ever known his wife. Madame de Marsay subsequently married the Marquis de Vordac, but before becoming a marquise she showed very little anxiety as to her son and Lord Dudley. To begin with, the declaration of war between France and England had separated the

two lovers, and fidelity at all costs was not, and never will be, the fashion of Paris. Then the successes of the woman, elegant, pretty, universally adored, crushed in the Parisienne the maternal sentiment. Lord Dudley was no more troubled about his offspring than was the mother,—the speedy infidelity of a young girl he had ardently loved gave him, perhaps, a sort of aversion for all that issued from her. Moreover, fathers can, perhaps, only love the children with whom they are fully acquainted, a social belief of the utmost importance for the peace of families, which should be held by all the celibate, proving as it does that paternity is a sentiment nourished artificially by woman, custom, and the law.

Poor Henri de Marsay knew no other father than that one of the two who was not compelled to be one. The paternity of M. de Marsay was naturally most incomplete. In the natural order, it is but for a few fleeting instants that children have a father, and M. de Marsay imitated nature. The worthy man would not have sold his name had he been

hibited human emotions to him one by one; taught him ics in the drawing-rooms, where they simmered at the explained to him the machinery of government, and ıvored out of attraction towards a fine nature, deserted, ich in promise, virilely to replace a mother: is not the ch the mother of orphans? The pupil was responsive much care. The worthy priest died in 1812, a bishop, the satisfaction of having left in this world a child e heart and mind were so well moulded that he could it a man of forty. Who would have expected to have l a heart of bronze, a brain of steel, beneath external ı as seductive as ever the old painters, those naïve s, had given to the serpent in the terrestrial paradise? was that all. In addition, the good-natured prelate had ıred for the child of his choice certain acquaintances e best Parisian society, which might equal in value, in the g man's hand, another hundred thousand invested livres. ıe, this priest, vicious but politic, sceptical yet learned, nerous yet amiable, weak in appearance yet as vigorous cally as intellectually, was so genuinely useful to his , so complacent to his vices, so fine a calculator of all of strength, so profound when it was needful to make human reckoning, so youthful at table, at Frascati, at— ow not where, that the grateful Henri de Marsay was y moved at aught in 1814, except when he looked at the ait of his beloved bishop, the only personal possession ı the prelate had been able to bequeath him (admirable of the men whose genius will preserve the Catholic, olic, and Roman Church, compromised for the moment e feebleness of its recruits and the decrepit age of its ffs; but if the church likes!).

e continental war prevented young De Marsay from ing his real father. It is doubtful whether he was of his name. A deserted child, he was equally ignorant ıdame de Marsay. Naturally, he had little regret for his ive father. As for Mademoiselle de Marsay, his only er, he built for her a handsome little monument in Père

Lachaise when she died. Monseigneur de Maronis had guaranteed to this old lady one of the best places in the skies, so that when he saw her die happy, Henri gave her some egotistical tears; he began to weep on his own account. Observing this grief, the abbé dried his pupil's tears, bidding him observe that the good woman took her snuff most offensively, and was becoming so ugly and deaf and tedious that he ought to return thanks for her death. The bishop had emancipated his pupil in 1811. Then, when the mother of M. de Marsay remarried, the priest chose, in a family council, one of those honest dullards, picked out by him through the windows of his confessional, and charged him with the administration of the fortune, the revenues of which he was willing to apply to the needs of the community, but of which he wished to preserve the capital.

Towards the end of 1814, then, Henri de Marsay had no sentiment of obligation in the world, and was as free as an unmated bird. Although he had lived twenty-two years

race; was as light as a cherub and quiet as a lamb, but
now to beat a townsman at the terrible game of *savate*
gels; moreover, he played the piano in a fashion which
have enabled him to become an artist should he fall
amity, and owned a voice which would have been worth
baja fifty thousand francs a season. Alas, that all
fine qualities, these pretty faults, were tarnished by
ominable vice: he believed neither in man nor woman,
or Devil. Capricious nature had commenced by en-
g him, a priest had completed the work.
render this adventure comprehensible, it is necessary
here that Lord Dudley naturally found many women
d to reproduce samples of such a delicious pattern.
cond masterpiece of this kind was a young girl named
mie, born of a Spanish lady, reared in Havana, and
t to Madrid with a young Creole woman of the Antilles,
th all the ruinous tastes of the Colonies, but fortunately
d to an old and extremely rich Spanish noble, Don
Marquis de San-Réal, who, since the occupation of
by French troops, had taken up his abode in Paris,
ed in the Rue St. Lazare. As much from indifference
n any respect for the innocence of youth, Lord Dudley
t in the habit of keeping his children informed of
lations he created for them in all parts. That is a
y inconvenient form of civilization; it has so many
ages that we must overlook its drawbacks in con-
ion of its benefits. Lord Dudley, to make no more
of it, came to Paris in 1816 to take refuge from the
t of English justice, which protects nothing Oriental
commerce. The exiled lord, when he saw Henri, asked
at handsome young man might be. Then, upon hear-
name, "Ah, it is my son. . . . What a pity!" he

was the story of the young man who, about the
of the month of April, 1815, was walking indolently
broad avenue of the Tuileries, after the fashion of
se animals who, knowing their strength, pass along

in majesty and peace. Middle-class matrons turned back naïvely to look at him again; other women, without turning round, waited for him to pass again, and engraved him in their minds that they might remember in due season that fragrant face, which would not have disadorned the body of the fairest among themselves.

"What are you doing here on Sunday?" said the Marquis de Ronquerolles to Henri, as he passed.

"There's a fish in the net," answered the young man.

This exchange of thoughts was accomplished by means of two significant glances, without it appearing that either De Ronquerolles or De Marsay had any knowledge of the other. The young man was taking note of the passers-by with that promptitude of eye and ear which is peculiar to the Parisian, who seems, at first sight, to see and hear nothing, but who sees and hears all.

At that moment a young man came up to him and took him familiarly by the arm, saying to him: "How are you, my

r of those mediocrities beneath the yoke of which France is wed down. They are always there, always ready to bungle ablic or private concerns with the dull trowel of their medi-rity, bragging of their impotence, which they count for con-ect and integrity. This sort of social *prizemen* infests the lministration, the army, the magistracy, the chambers, the urts. They diminish and level down the country and con-itute, in some manner, in the body politic, a lymph which ifects it and renders it flabby. These honest folk call men f talent immoral or rogues. If such rogues require to be aid for their services, at least their services are there; hereas the other sort do harm and are respected by the mob; nt, happily for France, elegant youth stigmatizes them cease-ssly under the name of louts.

At the first glance, then, it is natural to consider as very istinct the two sorts of young men who lead the life of ele-ance, the amiable corporation to which Henri de Marsay be-nged. But the observer, who goes beyond the superficial spect of things, is soon convinced that the difference is purely oral, and that nothing is so deceptive as this pretty outside. ievertheless, all alike take precedence over everybody else; peak rightly or wrongly of things, of men, literature, and he fine arts; have ever in their mouth the Pitt and Coburg f each year; interrupt a conversation with a pun; turn into idicule science and the *savant;* despise all things which they o not know or which they fear; set themselves above all by onstituting themselves the supreme judges of all. They ould all hoax their fathers, and be ready to shed crocodile ears upon their mothers' breasts; but generally they believe n nothing, blaspheme women, or play at modesty, and in ality are led by some old woman or an evil courtesan. They re all equally eaten to the bone with calculation, with de-ravity, with a brutal lust to succeed, and if you plumbed or their hearts you would find in all a stone. In their nor-al state they have the prettiest exterior, stake their friend-ip at every turn, are captivating alike. The same badinage ominates their ever-changing jargon; they seek for oddity

in their toilette, glory in repeating the stupidities of such and such actor who is in fashion, and commence operations, it matters not with whom, with contempt and impertinence, in order to have, as it were, the first move in the game; but, woe betide him who does not know how to take a blow on one cheek for the sake of rendering two. They resemble, in fine, that pretty white spray which crests the stormy waves. They dress and dance, dine and take their pleasure, on the day of Waterloo, in the time of cholera or revolution. Finally, their expenses are all the same, but here the contrast comes in. Of this fluctuating fortune, so agreeably flung away, some possess the capital for which the others wait; they have the same tailors, but the bills of the latter are still to pay. Next, if the first, like sieves, take in ideas of all kinds without retaining any, the latter compare them and assimilate all the good. If the first believe they know something, know nothing and understand everything, lend all to those who need nothing and offer nothing to those who are in need; the latter study secretly others' thoughts and place out their

armed with an incessant distrust of men, whom they estimate at their value, and are sufficiently profound to have one thought beyond their friends, whom they exploit; then of evenings, when they lay their heads on their pillows, they weigh men as a miser weighs his golden pieces. The one are vexed at an aimless impertinence, and allow themselves to be ridiculed by the diplomatic, who make them dance for them by pulling what is the main string of these puppets—their vanity. Thus, a day comes when those who had nothing have something, and those who had something have nothing. The latter look at their comrades who have achieved positions as cunning fellows; their hearts may be bad, but their heads are strong. "He is very strong!" is the supreme praise accorded to those who have attained *quibuscumque viis*, political rank, a woman, or a fortune. Amongst them are to be found certain young men who play this *rôle* by commencing with having debts. Naturally, these are more dangerous than those who play it without a farthing.

The young man who called himself a friend of Henri de Marsay was a rattle-head who had come from the provinces, and whom the young men then in the fashion were teaching the art of running through an inheritance; but he had one last leg to stand on in his province, in the shape of a secure establishment. He was simply an heir who had passed without any transition from his pittance of a hundred francs a month to the entire paternal fortune, and who, if he had not wit enough to perceive that he was laughed at, was sufficiently cautious to stop short at two-thirds of his capital. He had learned at Paris, for a consideration of some thousands of francs, the exact value of harness, the art of not being too respectful to his gloves, learned to make skilful meditations upon the right wages to give people, and to seek out what bargain was the best to close with them. He set store on his capacity to speak in good terms of his horses, of his Pyrenean hound; to tell by her dress, her walk, her shoes, to what class a woman belonged; to study *écarté*, remember a few fashionable catchwords, and win by his sojourn in Parisian society

the necessary authority to import later into his province a taste for tea and silver of an English fashion, and to obtain the right of despising everything around him for the rest of his days.

De Marsay had admitted him to his society in order to make use of him in the world, just as a bold speculator employs a confidential clerk. The friendship, real or feigned, of De Marsay was a social position for Paul de Manerville, who, on his side, thought himself astute in exploiting, after his fashion, his intimate friend. He lived in the reflecting lustre of his friend, walked constantly under his umbrella, wore his boots, gilded himself with his rays. When he posed in Henri's company or walked at his side, he had the air of saying: "Don't insult us, we are real dogs." He often permitted himself to remark fatuously: "If I were to ask Henri for such and such a thing, he is a good enough friend of mine to do it." But he was careful never to ask anything of him.

sk me what is Paul? Paul? Why, Paul de Maner-

n surprised, my dear fellow," he said to De Marsay,
you here on a Sunday."
is going to ask you the same question."
an intrigue?"
intrigue."
!"
n mention it to you without compromising my pas-
besides, a woman who comes to the Tuileries on Sun-
of no account, aristocratically speaking."
ah!"
d your tongue then, or I shall tell you nothing. Your
s too loud, you will make people think that we have
too well. Last Thursday, here on the Terrasse des
its, I was walking along, thinking of nothing at all,
en I got to the gate of the Rue de Castiglione, by
intended to leave, I came face to face with a woman,
r with a young girl; who, if she did not throw her-
ny head, stopped short, less I think, from human re-
han from one of those movements of profound sur-
hich affect the limbs, creep down the length of the
nd cease only in the sole of the feet, to nail you to
and. I have often produced effects of this nature, a
animal magnetism which becomes enormously power-
n the relations are reciprocally precise. But, my dear
this was not stupefaction, nor was she a common girl.
speaking, her face seemed to say: 'What, is it you,
l! The creation of my thoughts, of my morning and
dreams! What, are you there? Why this morning?
t yesterday? Take me, I am thine, *et cetera!*' Good,
o myself, another one! Then I scrutinize her. Ah,
fellow, speaking physically, my incognita is the most
e feminine person whom I ever met. She belongs to
ninine variety which the Romans call *fulva, flava*—
nan of fire. And in chief, what struck me the most,
am still taken with, are her two yellow eyes, like a

tiger's, a golden yellow that gleams, living gold, gold which thinks, gold which loves, and is determined to take refuge in your pocket."

"My dear fellow, we are full of her!" cried Paul. "She comes here sometimes—*the girl with the golden eyes!* That is the name we have given her. She is a young creature—not more than twenty-two, and I have seen her here in the time of the Bourbons, but with a woman who was worth a hundred thousand of her."

"Silence, Paul! It is impossible for any woman to surpass this girl; she is like the cat who rubs herself against your legs; a white girl with ash-colored hair, delicate in appearance, but who must have downy threads on the third phalanx of her fingers, and all along her cheeks a white down whose line, luminous on fine days, begins at her ears and loses itself on her neck."

"Ah, the other, my dear De Marsay! She has black eyes which have never went, but which burn; black eyebrows which

more than a gew-gaw and hang it on their watch-chains—whereas, it is the whole woman, an abyss of pleasure into which one plunges and finds no end; whereas, it is the ideal woman, to be seen sometimes in reality in Spain or Italy, almost never in France. Well, I have again seen this girl of the gold eyes, this woman caressing her chimera. I saw her on Friday. I had a presentiment that on the following day she would be here at the same hour; I was not mistaken. I have taken a pleasure in following her without being observed, in studying her indolent walk, the walk of the woman without occupation, but in the movements of which one divines all the pleasure that lies asleep. Well, she turned back again, she saw me, once more she adored me, once more trembled, shivered. It was then I noticed the genuine Spanish duenna who looked after her, a hyena upon whom some jealous man has put a dress, a she-devil well paid, no doubt, to guard this delicious creature. . . . Ah, then the duenna made me deeper in love. I grew curious. On Saturday, nobody. And here I am to-day waiting for this girl whose chimera I am, asking nothing better than to pose as the monster in the fresco."

"There she is," said Paul. "Every one is turning round to look at her."

The unknown blushed, her eyes shone; as she saw Henri, she shut them and passed by.

"You say that she notices you?" cried Paul, facetiously.

The duenna looked fixedly and attentively at the two young men. When the unknown and Henri passed each other again, the young girl touched him, and with her hand pressed the hand of the young man. Then she turned her head and smiled with passion, but the duenna led her away very quickly to the gate of the Rue de Castiglione.

The two friends followed the young girl, admiring the magnificent grace of the neck which met her head in a harmony of vigorous lines, and upon which a few coils of hair were tightly wound. The girl with the golden eyes had that well-knitted, arched, slender foot which presents so many attrac-

tions to the dainty imagination. Moreover, she was shod with elegance, and wore a short skirt. During her course she turned from time to time to look at Henri, and appeared to follow the old woman regretfully, seeming to be at once her mistress and her slave; she could break her with blows, but could not dismiss her. All that was perceptible. The two friends reached the gate. Two men in livery let down the step of a tasteful *coupé* emblazoned with armorial bearings. The girl with the golden eyes was the first to enter it, took her seat at the side where she could be best seen when the carriage turned, put her hand on the door, and waved her handkerchief in the duenna's despite. In contempt of what might be said by the curious, her handkerchief cried to Henri openly: "Follow me!"

"Have you ever seen the handkerchief better thrown?" said Henri to Paul de Manerville.

Then, observing a fiacre on the point of departure, having just set down a fare, he made a sign to the driver to wait.

"Follow that carriage, notice the house and the street where

to imitate. When the postman, who went the round of the Rue Saint Lazare that morning, passed by, Laurent feigned to be a porter unable to remember the name of a person to whom he had to deliver a parcel, and consulted the postman. Deceived at first by appearances, this personage, so picturesque in the midst of Parisian civilization, informed him that the house in which the girl with the golden eyes dwelt belonged to Don Hijos, Marquis de San-Réal, grandee of Spain. Naturally, it was not with the Marquis that the Auvergnat was concerned.

"My parcel," he said, "is for the marquise."

"She is away," replied the postman. "Her letters are forwarded to London."

"Then the marquise is not a young girl who . . . ?"

"Ah!" said the postman, interrupting the *valet de chambre* and observing him attentively, "you are as much a porter as I'm . . ."

Laurent chinked some pieces of gold before the functionary, who began to smile.

"Come, here's the name of your quarry," he said, taking from his leather wallet a letter bearing a London stamp, upon which the address, "To Mademoiselle Paquita Valdès, Rue Saint Lazare, Hotel San-Réal, Paris," was written in long, fine characters, which spoke of a woman's hand.

"Could you tap a bottle of Chablis, with a few dozen oysters, and a *filet sauté* with mushrooms to follow it?" said Laurent, who wished to win the postman's valuable friendship.

"At half-past nine, when my round is finished—— Where?"

"At the corner of the Rue de la Chaussée-d'Antin and the Rue Neuve-des-Mathurins, at the *Puits sans Vin*," said Laurent.

"Hark ye, my friend," said the postman, when he rejoined the valet an hour after this encounter, "if your master is in love with the girl, he is in for a famous task. I doubt you'll not succeed in seeing her. In the ten years that I've been postman in Paris, I have seen plenty of different kinds of

doors! But I can tell you, and no fear of being called a liar by any of my comrades, there never was a door so mysterious as M. de San-Réal's. No one can get into the house without the Lord knows what counter-word; and, notice, it has been selected on purpose between a courtyard and a garden to avoid any communication with other houses. The porter is an old Spaniard, who never speaks a word of French, but peers at people, as Vidocq might, to see if they are not thieves. If a lover, a thief, or you—I make no comparisons—could get the better of this first wicket, well, in the first hall, which is shut by a glazed door, you would run across a butler surrounded by lackeys, an old joker more savage and surly even than the porter. If any one gets past the porter's lodge, my butler comes out, waits for you at the entrance, and puts you through a cross-examination like a criminal. That has happened to me, a mere postman. He took me for an eavesdropper in disguise, he said, laughing at his nonsense. As for the servants, don't hope to get aught out of them; I think they are mutes, no one in the neighborhood knows the color

them down pieces, but it seems they have been trained to touch nothing except from the hand of the porter."

"The porter of the Baron de Nucingen, whose garden joins at the top that of the Hotel San-Réal, told me the same thing," replied the postman.

"Good! my master knows him," said Laurent, to himself. "Do you know," he went on, leering at the postman, "I serve a master who is a rare man, and if he took it into his head to kiss the sole of the foot of an empress, she would have to give in to him. If he had need of you, which is what I wish for you, for he is generous, could one count on you?"

"Lord, Monsieur Laurent, my name is Moinot. My name is written exactly like *Moineau,* magpie: M-o-i-n-o-t, Moinot."

"Exactly," said Laurent.

"I live at No. 11, Rue des Trois Frères, on the fifth floor," went on Moinot; "I have a wife and four children. If what you want of me doesn't transgress the limits of my conscience and my official duties, you understand! I am your man."

"You are an honest fellow," said Laurent, shaking his hand. . . .

"Paquita Valdès is, no doubt, the mistress of the Marquis de San-Réal, the friend of King Ferdinand. Only an old Spanish mummy of eighty years is capable of taking such precautions," said Henri, when his *valet de chambre* had related the result of his researches.

"Monsieur," said Laurent, "unless he takes a balloon no one can get into that hotel."

"You are a fool! Is it necessary to get into the hotel to have Paquita, when Paquita can get out of it?"

"But, sir, the duenna?"

"We will shut her up for a day or two, your duenna."

"So, we shall have Paquita!" said Laurent, rubbing his hands.

"Rascal!" answered Henri, "I shall condemn you to the Concha, if you carry your impudence so far as to speak so of a woman before she has become mine. . . . Turn your thoughts to dressing me, I am going out."

Henri remained for a moment plunged in joyous reflections. Let us say it to the praise of women, he obtained all those whom he deigned to desire. And what could one think of a woman, having no lover, who should have known how to resist a young man armed with beauty which is the intelligence of the body, with intelligence which is a grace of the soul, armed with moral force and fortune, which are the only two real powers? Yet, in triumphing with such ease, De Marsay was bound to grow weary of his triumphs; thus, for about two years he had grown very weary indeed. And diving deep into the sea of pleasures he brought back more grit than pearls. Thus had he come, like potentates, to implore of Chance some obstacle to surmount, some enterprise which should ask the employment of his dormant moral and physical strength. Although Paquita Valdès presented him with a marvelous concentration of perfections which he had only yet enjoyed in detail, the attraction of passion was almost *nil* with him. Constant satiety had weakened in his heart

question of doing battle with some secret enemy who seemed as dangerous as he was cunning; and to carry off the victory, all the forces which Henri could dispose of would be useful. He was about to play in that eternal old comedy which will be always fresh, and the characters in which are an old man, a young girl, and a lover: Don Hijos, Paquita, De Marsay. If Laurent was the equal of Figaro, the duenna seemed incorruptible. Thus, the living play was supplied by Chance with a stronger plot than it had ever been by dramatic author! But then is not Chance, too, a man of genius?

"It must be a cautious game," said Henri, to himself.

"Well," said Paul de Manerville, as he entered the room. "How are we getting on? I have come to breakfast with you."

"So be it" said Henri. "You won't be shocked if I make my toilette before you?"

"How absurd!"

"We take so many things from the English just now that we might well become as great prudes and hypocrites as themselves," said Henri.

Laurent had set before his master such a quantity of utensils, so many different articles of such elegance, that Paul could not refrain from saying:

"But you will take a couple of hours over that?"

"No!" said Henri, "two hours and a half."

"Well, then, since we are by ourselves, and can say what we like, explain to me why a man as superior as yourself—for you are superior—should affect to exaggerate a foppery which cannot be natural. Why spend two hours and a half in adorning yourself, when it is sufficient to spend a quarter of an hour in your bath, to do your hair in two minutes, and to dress! There, tell me your system."

"I must be very fond of you, my good dunce, to confide such high thoughts to you," said the young man, who was at that moment having his feet rubbed with a soft brush lathered with English soap.

"Have I not the most devoted attachment to you," replied

Paul de Manerville, "and do I not like you because I know your superiority? . . ."

"You must have noticed, if you are in the least capable of observing any moral fact, that women love fops," went on De Marsay, without replying in any way to Paul's declaration except by a look. "Do you know why women love fops? My friend, fops are the only men who take care of themselves. Now, to take excessive care of oneself, does it not imply that one takes care in oneself of what belongs to another? The man who does not belong to himself is precisely the man on whom women are keen. Love is essentially a thief. I say nothing about that excess of niceness to which they are so devoted. Do you know of any woman who has had a passion for a sloven, even if he were a remarkable man? If such a fact has occurred, we must put it to the account of those morbid affections of the breeding woman, mad fancies which float through the minds of everybody. On the other hand, I have seen most remarkable people left in the lurch because of

You will come to signify *folly* as inseparably as M. de La Fayette signifies *America;* M. de Talleyrand, *diplomacy;* Désaugiers, *song;* M. de Ségur, *romance.* If they once forsake their own line people no longer attach any value to what they do. So, foppery, my friend Paul, is the sign of an incontestable power over the female folk. A man who is loved by many women passes for having superior qualities, and then, poor fellow, it is a question who shall have him! But do you think it is nothing to have the right of going into a drawing-room, of looking down at people from over your cravat, or through your eye-glass, and of despising the most superior of men should he wear an old-fashioned waistcoat? . . . Laurent, you are hurting me! After breakfast, Paul, we will go to the Tuileries and see the adorable girl with the golden eyes."

When, after making an excellent meal, the two young men had traversed the Terrasse des Feuillants and the broad walk of the Tuileries, they nowhere discovered the sublime Paquita Valdès, on whose account some fifty of the most elegant young men in Paris were to be seen, all scented, with their high scarfs, spurred and booted, riding, walking, talking, laughing, and damning themselves mightily.

"It's a white Mass," said Henri; "but I have the most excellent idea in the world. This girl receives letters from London. The postman must be bought or made drunk, a letter opened, read of course, and a love-letter slipped in before it is sealed up again. The old tyrant, *crudel tirano,* is certain to know the person who writes the letters from London, and has ceased to be suspicious of them."

The day after, De Marsay came again to walk on the Terrasse des Feuillants, and saw Paquita Valdès; already passion had embellished her for him. Seriously, he was wild for those eyes, whose rays seemed akin to those which the sun emits, and whose ardor set the seal upon that of her perfect body, in which all was delight. De Marsay was on fire to brush the dress of this enchanting girl as they passed one another in their walk; but his attempts were always vain.

But at one moment, when he had repassed Paquita and the duenna, in order to find himself on the same side as the girl of the golden eyes, when he returned, Paquita, no less impatient, came forward hurriedly, and De Marsay felt his hand pressed by her in a fashion at once so swift and so passionately significant that it was as though he had received the shock of an electric current. In an instant all his youthful emotions surged up in his heart. When the two lovers glanced at one another, Paquita seemed ashamed, she dropped her eyes lest she should meet the eyes of Henri, but her gaze sank lower to fasten on the feet and form of him whom women, before the Revolution, called *their conqueror*.

"I am determined to make this girl my mistress," said Henri to himself.

As he followed her along the terrace, in the direction of the Place Louis XV., he caught sight of the aged Marquis de San-Réal, who was walking on the arm of his valet, stepping with all the precautions due to gout and decrepitude.

Some days later, none knew by what means, De Marsay had attained his end; he had a seal and wax, exactly resembling the seal and the wax affixed to the letters sent to Mademoiselle Valdès from London; paper similar to that which her correspondent used; moreover, all the implements and stamps necessary to affix the French and English postmarks.

He wrote the following letter, to which he gave all the appearances of a letter sent from London:—

"My dear Paquita,—I shall not try to paint to you in words the passion with which you have inspired me. If, to my happiness, you reciprocate it, understand that I have found a means of corresponding with you. My name is Adolphe de Gouges, and I live at No. 54 Rue de l'Université. If you are too closely watched to be able to write to me, if you have neither pen nor paper, I shall understand it by your silence. If then, to-morrow, you have not, between eight o'clock in the morning and ten o'clock in the evening, thrown a letter over the wall of your garden into that of the Baron de Nucingen, where it will be waited for during the whole of the day, a man, who is entirely devoted to me, will let down two flasks by a string over your wall at ten o'clock the next morning. Be walking there at that hour. One of the two flasks will contain opium to send your Argus to sleep; it will be sufficient to employ six drops; the other will contain ink. The flask of ink is of cut glass; the other is plain. Both are of such a size as can easily be concealed within your bosom. All that I have already done, in order to be able to correspond with you, should tell you how greatly I love you. Should you have any doubt of it, I will confess to you, that to obtain an interview of one hour with you I would give my life."

"At least they believe that, poor creatures!" said De Marsay; "but they are right. What should we think of a woman who refused to be beguiled by a love-letter accompanied by such convincing accessories?"

This letter was delivered by Master Moinot, postman, on the following day, about eight o'clock in the morning, to the porter of the Hotel San-Réal.

In order to be nearer to the field of action, De Marsay went and breakfasted with Paul, who lived in the Rue de la Pépinière. At two o'clock, just as the two friends were laughingly discussing the discomfiture of a young man who had attempted to lead the life of fashion without a settled income, and were devising an end for him, Henri's coachman came to seek his master at Paul's house, and presented to him a mysterious personage who insisted on speaking himself with his master.

This individual was a mulatto, who would assuredly have given Talma a model for the part of Othello, if he had come across him. Never did any African face better express the grand vengefulness, the ready suspicion, the promptitude in the execution of a thought, the strength of the Moor, and his childish lack of reflection. His black eyes had the fixity of

"Who has hunted us out these two extraordinary creatures?" said Henri.

"Faith! there is one of them who makes me shudder," replied Paul.

"Who are you—you fellow who look the most like a Christian of the two?" said Henri, looking at the unfortunate man.

The mulatto stood with his eyes fixed upon the two young men, like a man who understood nothing, and who sought no less to divine something from the gestures and movements of the lips.

"I am a public scribe and interpreter; I live at the Palais de Justice, and am named Poincet."

"Good! . . . and this one?" said Henri to Poincet, looking towards the mulatto.

"I do not know; he only speaks a sort of Spanish *patois*, and he has brought me here to make himself understood by you."

The mulatto drew from his pocket the letter which Henri had written to Paquita and handed it to him. Henri threw it in the fire.

"Ah—so—the game is beginning," said Henri to himself. "Paul, leave us alone for a moment."

"I translated this letter for him," went on the interpreter, when they were alone. "When it was translated, he was in some place which I don't remember. Then he came back to look for me, and promised me two *louis* to fetch him here."

"What have you got to say to me, nigger?" asked Henri.

"I did not translate *nigger*," said the interpreter, waiting for the mulatto's reply. . . .

"He said, sir," went on the interpreter, after having listened to the unknown, "that you must be at half-past ten tomorrow night on the Boulevard Montmartre, near the café. You will see a carriage there, in which you must take your place, saying to the man, who will wait to open the door for you, the word *cortejo*—a Spanish word, which means *lover*," added Poincet, casting a glance of congratulation upon Henri.

"Good."

The mulatto was about to bestow the two *louis*, but De Marsay would not permit it, and himself rewarded the interpreter. As he was paying him, the mulatto began to speak.

"What is he saying?"

"He is warning me," replied the unfortunate, "that if I commit a single indiscretion he will strangle me. He speaks fair and he looks remarkably as if he were capable of carrying out his threat."

"I am sure of it," answered Henri; "he would keep his word."

"He says, as well," replied the interpreter, "that the person from whom he is sent implores you, for your sake and for hers, to act with the greatest prudence, because the daggers which are raised above your head would strike your heart before any human power could save you from them."

"He said that? So much the better, it will be more amus-

In order to live until the morrow without too much pain, he had recourse to exorbitant pleasure; he played, dined, supped with his friends; he drank like a fish, ate like a German, and won ten or twelve thousand francs. He left the Rocher de Cancale at two o'clock in the morning, slept like a child, awoke the next morning fresh and rosy, and dressed to go to the Tuileries, with the intention of taking a ride, after having seen Paquita, in order to get himself an appetite and dine the better, and so kill the time.

At the hour mentioned Henri was on the boulevard, saw the carriage, and gave the counter-word to a man who looked to him like the mulatto. Hearing the word, the man opened the door and quickly let down the step. Henri was so rapidly carried through Paris, and his thoughts left him so little capacity to pay attention to the streets through which he passed, that he did not know where the carriage stopped. The mulatto let him into a house, the staircase of which was quite close to the entrance. This staircase was dark, as was also the landing upon which Henri was obliged to wait while the mulatto was opening the door of a damp apartment, fetid and unlit, the chambers of which, barely illuminated by the candle which his guide found in the ante-chamber, seemed to him empty and ill furnished, like those of a house the inhabitants of which are away. He recognized the sensation which he had experienced from the perusal of one of those romances of Anne Radcliffe, in which the hero traverses the cold, sombre, and uninhabited saloons of some sad and desert spot.

At last the mulatto opened the door of a *salon*. The condition of the old furniture and the dilapidated curtains with which the room was adorned gave it the air of the reception-room of a house of ill fame. There was the same pretension to elegance, and the same collection of things in bad taste, of dust and dirt. Upon a sofa covered with red Utrecht velvet, by the side of a smoking hearth, the fire of which was buried in ashes, sat an old, poorly dressed woman, her head capped by one of those turbans which English women of a

certain age have invented and which would have a mighty success in China, where the artist's ideal is the monstrous.

The room, the old woman, the cold hearth, all would have chilled love to death had not Paquita been there, upon an ottoman, in a loose voluptuous wrapper, free to scatter her gaze of gold and flame, free to show her arched foot, free of her luminous movements. This first interview was what every *rendezvous* must be between persons of passionate disposition, who have stepped over a wide distance quickly, who desire each other ardently, and who, nevertheless, do not know each other. It is impossible that at first there should not occur certain discordant notes in the situation, which is embarrassing until the moment when two souls find themselves in unison.

If desire gives a man boldness and disposes him to lay restraint aside, the mistress, under pain of ceasing to be woman, however great may be her love, is afraid of arriving at the end so promptly, and face to face with the necessity of giving

have brought them to the happy transition which leads to that flowery way in which one does not walk, but where one sways and at the same time does not lapse.

Such a state of mind is always in proportion with the violence of the feeling. Two creatures who love one another weakly feel nothing similar. The effect of this crisis can even be compared with that which is produced by the glow of a clear sky. Nature, at the first view, appears to be covered with a gauze veil, the azure of the firmament seems black, the intensity of light is like darkness. With Henri, as with the Spanish girl, there was an equal intensity of feeling; and that law of statics, in virtue of which two identical forces cancel each other, might have been true also in the moral order. And the embarrassment of that moment was singularly increased by the presence of the old hag. Love takes pleasure or fright at all, all has a meaning for it, everything is an omen of happiness or sorrow for it.

This decrepit woman was there like a suggestion of catastrophe, and represented the horrid fish's tail with which the allegorical geniuses of Greece have terminated their chimeras and sirens, whose figures, like all passions, are so seductive, so deceptive.

Although Henri was not a free-thinker—the phrase is always a mockery—but a man of extraordinary power, a man as great as a man can be without faith, the conjunction struck him. Moreover, the strongest men are naturally the most impressionable, and consequently the most superstitious, if, indeed, one may call superstition the prejudice of first thoughts, which, without doubt, is the appreciation of the result in causes hidden to other eyes but perceptible to their own.

The Spanish girl profited by this moment of stupefaction to let herself fall into the ecstasy of that infinite adoration which seizes the heart of a woman, when she truly loves and finds herself in the presence of an idol for whom she has vainly longed. Her eyes were all joy, all happiness, and sparks flew from them. She was under the charm, and fear-

lessly intoxicated herself with a felicity of which she had dreamed long. She seemed then so marvelously beautiful to Henri, that all this phantasmagoria of rags and old age, of worn red drapery and of the green mats in front of the arm-chairs, the ill-washed red tiles, all this sick and dilapidated luxury, disappeared.

The room seemed lit up; and it was only through a cloud that one could see the fearful harpy fixed and dumb on her red sofa, her yellow eyes betraying the servile sentiments, inspired by misfortune, or caused by some vice beneath whose servitude one has fallen as beneath a tyrant who brutalizes one with the flagellations of his despotism. Her eyes had the cold glitter of a caged tiger, knowing his impotence and being compelled to swallow his rage of destruction.

"Who is that woman?" said Henri to Paquita.

But Paquita did not answer. She made a sign that she understood no French, and asked Henri if he spoke English.

De Marsay repeated his question in English.

"After," she said, showing the absorption of a weak woman before the executioner's axe, and slain in advance, as it were, by a fear which stripped her of that magnificent energy which Nature seemed to have bestowed upon her only to aggrandize pleasure and convert the most vulgar delights into endless poems. "After——" she repeated. Her eyes took a fixed stare; she seemed to contemplate a threatening object far away.

"I do not know," she said.

"This girl is mad," said Henri to himself, falling into strange reflections.

Paquita appeared to him occupied by something which was not himself, like a woman constrained equally by remorse and passion. Perhaps she had in her heart another love which she alternately remembered and forgot. In a moment Henri was assailed by a thousand contradictory thoughts. This girl became a mystery for him; but as he contemplated her with the scientific attention of the *blasé* man, famished for new pleasures, like that Eastern king who asked that a pleasure should be created for him,—a horrible thirst with which great souls are seized,—Henri recognized in Paquita the richest organization that Nature had ever deigned to compose for love. The presumptive play of this machinery, setting aside the soul, would have frightened any other man than Henri; but he was fascinated by that rich harvest of promised pleasures, by that constant variety in happiness, the dream of every man, and the desire of every loving woman too. He was infuriated by the infinite rendered palpable, and transported into the most excessive raptures of which the creature is capable. All that he saw in this girl more distinctly than he had yet seen it, for she let herself be viewed complacently, happy to be admired. The admiration of De Marsay became a secret fury, and he unveiled her completely, throwing a glance at her which the Spaniard understood as though she had been used to receive such.

"If you are not to be mine, mine only, I will kill you!" he cried.

Hearing this speech, Paquita covered her face in her hands, and cried naïvely:

"Holy Virgin! What have I brought upon myself?"

She rose, flung herself down upon the red sofa, and buried her head in the rags which covered the bosom of her mother, and wept there. The old woman received her daughter without issuing from her state of immobility, or displaying any emotion. The mother possessed in the highest degree that gravity of savage races, the impassiveness of a statue upon which all remarks are lost. Did she or did she not love her daughter? Beneath that mask every human emotion might brood—good and evil; and from this creature all might be expected. Her gaze passed slowly from her daughter's beautiful hair, which covered her like a mantle, to the face of Henri, which she considered with an indescribable curiosity.

She seemed to ask by what fatality he was there, from what caprice Nature had made so seductive a man.

"These women are making sport of me," said Henri to

and repeating the same sound in a thousand different forms.

"It is the same voice!" said Paquita, in a melancholy voice, which De Marsay could not overhear, "and the same ardor," she added. "So be it—yes," she said, with an abandonment of passion which no words can describe. "Yes; but not to-night. To-night, Adolphe, I gave too little opium to La Concha. She might wake up, and I should be lost. At this moment the whole household believes me to be asleep in my room. In two days be at the same spot, say the same word to the same man. That man is my foster-father. Cristemio worships me, and would die in torments for me before they could extract one word against me from him. Farewell," she said, seizing Henri by the waist and twining round him like a serpent.

She pressed him on every side at once, lifted her head to his, and offered him her lips, then snatched a kiss which filled them both with such a dizziness that it seemed to Henri as though the earth opened; and Paquita cried: "Enough, depart!" in a voice which told how little she was mistress of herself. But she clung to him still, still crying "Depart!" and brought him slowly to the staircase. There the mulatto, whose white eyes lit up at the sight of Paquita, took the torch from the hands of his idol, and conducted Henri to the street. He left the light under the arch, opened the door, put Henri into the carriage, and set him down on the Boulevard des Italiens with marvelous rapidity. It was as though the horses had hell-fire in their veins.

The scene was like a dream to De Marsay, but one of those dreams which, even when they fade away, leave a feeling of supernatural voluptuousness, which a man runs after for the remainder of his life. A single kiss had been enough. Never had *rendezvous* been spent in a manner more decorous or chaste, or, perhaps, more coldly, in a spot of which the surroundings were more gruesome, in presence of a more hideous divinity: for the mother had remained in Henri's imagination like some infernal, cowering thing, cadaverous, monstrous, savagely ferocious, which the imagination of poets and

painters had not yet conceived. In effect, no *rendezvous* had ever irritated his senses more, revealed more audacious pleasures, or better aroused love from its centre to shed itself round him like an atmosphere. There was something sombre, mysterious, sweet, tender, constrained, and expansive, an intermingling of the awful and the celestial, of paradise and hell, which made De Marsay like a drunken man.

He was no longer himself, and he was, withal, great enough to be able to resist the intoxication of pleasure.

In order to render his conduct intelligible in the catastrophe of this story, it is needful to explain how his soul had broadened at an age when young men generally belittle themselves in their relations with women, or in too much occupation with them. Its growth was due to a concurrence of secret circumstances, which invested him with a vast and unsuspected power.*

This young man held in his hand a sceptre more powerful than that of modern kings, almost all of whom are curbed in

ocable. An error was a misfortune similar to that which a thunderbolt causes when it falls upon a smiling Parisienne in some hackney coach, instead of crushing the old coachman who is driving her to a *rendezvous*. Thus the bitter and profound sarcasm which distinguished the young man's conversation usually tended to frighten people; no one was anxious to put him out. Women are prodigiously fond of those persons who call themselves pashas, and who are, as it were, accompanied by lions and executioners, and who walk in a panoply of terror. The result, in the case of such men, is a security of action, a certitude of power, a pride of gaze, a leonine consciousness, which makes women realize the type of strength of which they all dream. Such was De Marsay.

Happy, for the moment, with his future, he grew young and pliable, and thought of nothing but love as he went to bed. He dreamed of the girl with the golden eyes, as the young and passionate can dream. His dreams were monstrous images, unattainable extravagances—full of light, revealing invisible worlds, yet in a manner always incomplete, for an intervening veil changes the conditions of vision.

For the next and succeeding day Henri disappeared, and no one knew what had become of him. His power only belonged to him under certain conditions, and, happily for him, during those two days he was a private soldier in the service of the demon to whom he owed his talismanic existence. But at the appointed time, in the evening, he was waiting—and he had not long to wait—for the carriage. The mulatto approached Henri, in order to repeat to him in French a phrase which he seemed to have learned by heart.

"If you wish to come, she told me, you must consent to have your eyes bandaged."

And Cristemio produced a white silk handkerchief.

"No!" said Henri, whose omnipotence revolted suddenly.

He tried to leap in. The mulatto made a sign, and the carriage drove off.

"Yes!" cried De Marsay, furious at the thought of losing a piece of good fortune which had been promised him.

He saw, moreover, the impossibility of making terms with a slave whose obedience was as blind as the hangman's. Nor was it this passive instrument upon whom his anger could fall.

The mulatto whistled, the carriage returned. Henri got in hastily. Already a few curious onlookers had assembled like sheep on the boulevard. Henri was strong; he tried to play the mulatto. When the carriage started at a gallop he seized his hands, in order to master him, and retain, by subduing his attendant, the possession of his faculties, so that he might know whither he was going. It was a vain attempt. The eyes of the mulatto flashed from the darkness. The fellow uttered a cry which his fury stifled in his throat, released himself, threw back De Marsay with a hand like iron, and nailed him, so to speak, to the bottom of the carriage; then with his free hand, he drew a triangular dagger, and whistled. The coachman heard the whistle and stopped. Henri was unarmed, he was forced to yield. He moved his head towards

nity had thrown him, the ideas of vengeance to which he abandoned himself, the suppositions suggested to him by the circumstantial care which this girl had taken in order to bring him to her, all hindered him from that attention, which the blind have, necessary for the concentration of his intelligence and the perfect lucidity of his recollection. The journey lasted half an hour. When the carriage stopped, it was no longer on the street. The mulatto and the coachman took Henri in their arms, lifted him out, and, putting him into a sort of litter, conveyed him across a garden. He could smell its flowers and the perfume peculiar to trees and grass.

The silence which reigned there was so profound that he could distinguish the noise made by the drops of water falling from the moist leaves. The two men took him to a staircase, set him on his feet, led him by his hands through several apartments, and left him in a room whose atmosphere was perfumed, and the thick carpet of which he could feel beneath his feet.

A woman's hand pushed him on to a divan, and untied the handkerchief for him. Henri saw Paquita before him, but Paquita in all her womanly and voluptuous glory. The section of the boudoir in which Henri found himself described a circular line, softly gracious, which was faced opposite by the other perfectly square half, in the midst of which a chimney-piece shone of gold and white marble. He had entered by a door on one side, hidden by a rich tapestried screen, opposite which was a window. The semicircular portion was adorned with a real Turkish divan, that is to say, a mattress thrown on the ground, but a mattress as broad as a bed, a divan fifty feet in circumference, made of white cashmere, relieved by bows of black and scarlet silk, arranged in panels. The top of this huge bed was raised several inches by numerous cushions, which further enriched it by their tasteful comfort. The boudoir was lined with some red stuff, over which an Indian muslin was stretched, fluted after the fashion of Corinthian columns, in plaits

going in and out, and bound at the top and bottom by bands of poppy-colored stuff, on which were designs in black arabesque.

Below the muslin the poppy turned to rose, that amorous color, which was matched by window-curtains, which were of Indian muslin lined with rose-colored taffeta, and set off with a fringe of poppy-color and black. Six silver-gilt arms, each supporting two candles, were attached to the tapestry at an equal distance, to illuminate the divan. The ceiling, from the middle of which a lustre of unpolished silver hung, was of a brilliant whiteness, and the cornice was gilded. The carpet was like an Oriental shawl; it had the designs and recalled the poetry of Persia, where the hands of slaves had worked on it. The furniture was covered in white cashmere, relieved by black and poppy-colored ornaments. The clock, the candelabra, all were in white marble and gold. The only table there had a cloth of cashmere. Elegant flower-

knelt before him, adoring him as the god of this temple, whither he had deigned to come. Although De Marsay was accustomed to seeing the utmost efforts of Parisian luxury, he was surprised at the aspect of this shell, like that from which Venus rose out of the sea. Whether from an effect of contrast between the darkness from which he issued and the light which bathed his soul, whether from a comparison which he swiftly made between this scene and that of their first interview, he experienced one of those delicate sensations which true poetry gives. Perceiving in the midst of this retreat, which had been opened to him as by a fairy's magic wand, the masterpiece of creation, this girl, whose warmly colored tints, whose soft skin—soft, but slightly gilded by the shadows, by I know not what vaporous effusion of love—gleamed as though it reflected the rays of color and light, his anger, his desire for vengeance, his wounded vanity, all were lost.

Like an eagle darting on his prey, he took her utterly to him, set her on his knees, and felt with an indescribable intoxication the voluptuous pressure of this girl, whose richly developed beauties softly enveloped him.

"Come to me, Paquita!" he said, in a low voice,

"Speak, speak without fear!" she said. "This retreat was built for love. No sound can escape from it, so greatly was it desired to guard avariciously the accents and music of the beloved voice. However loud should be the cries, they would not be heard outside these walls. A person might be murdered, and his moans would be as vain as if he were in the midst of the great desert.

"Who has understood jealousy and its needs so well?"

"Never question me as to that," she answered, untying with a gesture of wonderful sweetness the young man's scarf, doubtless in order the better to behold his neck.

"Yes, there is the neck I love so well!" she said. "Wouldst thou please me?"

This interrogation, rendered by the accent almost lascivious, drew De Marsay from the reverie in which he had been

plunged by Paquita's authoritative refusal to allow him any research as to the unknown being who hovered like a shadow about them.

"And if I wished to know who reigns here?"

Paquita looked at him trembling.

"It is not I, then?" he said, rising and freeing himself from the girl, whose head fell backwards. "Where I am, I would be alone."

"Strike, strike! . . ." said the poor slave, a prey to terror.

"For what do you take me, then? . . . Will you answer?"

Paquita got up gently, her eyes full of tears, took a poniard from one of the two ebony pieces of furniture, and presented it to Henri with a gesture of submission which would have moved a tiger.

"Give me a feast such as men give when they love," she said, "and whilst I sleep, slay me, for I know not how to

at upon the heart of a woman who adores you, and it is I ho will be cast into the pit."

"All this appears to me prodigiously strange," said De larsay, considering her. "But you seem to me a good girl, strange nature; you are, upon my word of honor, a living iddle, the answer to which is very difficult to find."

Paquita understood nothing of what the young man said; he looked at him gently, opening wide eyes which could ever be stupid, so much was pleasure written in them.

"Come, then, my love," she said, returning to her first lea, "wouldst thou please me?"

"I would do all that thou wouldst, and even that thou ouldst not," answered De Marsay, with a laugh. He had scovered his foppish ease, as he took the resolve to let himelf go to the climax of his good fortune, looking neither beore nor after. Perhaps he counted, moreover, on his power nd his capacity of a man used to adventures, to dominate his girl a few hours later and learn all her secrets.

"Well," said she, "let me arrange you as I would like."

Paquita went joyously and took from one of the two chests robe of red velvet, in which she dressed De Marsay, then lorned his head with a woman's bonnet and wrapped a shawl ound him. Abandoning herself to these follies with a child's nocence, she laughed a convulsive laugh, and resembled ome bird flapping its wings; but he saw nothing beyond.

If it be impossible to paint the unheard-of delights which hese two creatures—made by heaven in a joyous moment—ound, it is perhaps necessary to translate metaphysically the xtraordinary and almost fantastic impressions of the young an. That which persons in the social position of De Marsay, living as he lived, are best able to recognize is a girl's innocence. But, strange phenomenon! The girl of the golden yes might be virgin, but innocent she was certainly not. he fantastic union of the mysterious and the real, of darkess and light, horror and beauty, pleasure and danger, paraise and hell, which had already been met with in this adenture, was resumed in the capricious and sublime being

with which De Marsay dallied. All the utmost science of the most refined pleasure, all that Henri could know of that poetry of the senses which is called love, was excelled by the treasures poured forth by this girl, whose radiant eyes gave the lie to none of the promises which they made.

She was an Oriental poem, in which shone the sun that Saadi, that Hafiz, have set in their pulsing strophes. Only, neither the rhythm of Saadi, nor that of Pindar, could have expressed the ecstasy—full of confusion and stupefaction—which seized the delicious girl when the error in which an iron hand had caused her to live was at an end.

"Dead!" she said, "I am dead, Adolphe! Take me away to the world's end, to an island where no one knows us. Let there be no traces of our flight! We should be followed to the gates of hell. God! here is the day! Escape! Shall I ever see you again? Yes, to-morrow I will see you, if I have to deal death to all my warders to have that joy. Till to-morrow."

it in a thousand details, which leave his achievement magnificently original; he has recommended it to posterity by great ideas which it is difficult to liberate by analysis, when, in one's youth, one reads this work with the object of finding in it the lurid representation of the most physical of our feelings, whereas serious and philosophical writers never employ its images except as the consequence or the corollary of a vast thought; and the adventures of Lord Edward are one of the most Europeanly delicate ideas of the whole work.

Henri, therefore, found himself beneath the domination of that confused sentiment which is unknown to true love. There was needful, in some sort, the persuasive grip of comparisons, and the irresistible attraction of memories to lead him back to a woman. True love rules above all through recollection. A woman who is not engraven upon the soul by excess of pleasure or by strength of emotion, how can she ever be loved? In Henri's case, Paquita had established herself by both of these reasons. But at this moment, seized as he was by the satiety of his happiness, that delicious melancholy of the body, he could hardly analyze his heart, even by recalling to his lips the taste of the liveliest gratifications that he had ever grasped.

He found himself on the Boulevard Montmartre at the break of day, gazed stupidly at the retreating carriage, produced two cigars from his pocket, lit one from the lantern of a good woman who sold brandy and coffee to workmen and street arabs and chestnut venders—to all the Parisian populace which begins its work before daybreak; then he went off, smoking his cigar, and putting his hands in his trousers' pockets with a devil-may-care air which did him small honor.

"What a good thing a cigar is! That's one thing a man will never tire of," he said to himself.

Of the girl with the golden eyes, over whom at that time all the elegant youth of Paris was mad, he hardly thought. The idea of death, expressed in the midst of their pleasure, and the fear of which had more than once darkened the brow of that beautiful creature, who held to the houris of Asia

by her mother, to Europe by her education, to the tropics by her birth, seemed to him merely one of those deceptions by which women seek to make themselves interesting.

"She is from Havana—the most Spanish region to be found in the New World. So she preferred to feign terror rather than cast in my teeth indisposition or difficulty, coquetry or duty, like a Parisian woman. By her golden eyes, how glad I shall be to sleep."

He saw a hackney coach standing at the corner of Frascati's waiting for some gambler; he awoke the driver, was driven home, went to bed, and slept the sleep of the dissipated, which, for some queer reason—of which no rhymer has yet taken advantage—is as profound as that of innocence. Perhaps it is an instance of the proverbial axiom, *extremes meet.*

About noon De Marsay awoke and stretched himself; he felt the grip of that sort of voracious hunger which old soldiers can remember having experienced on the morrow of victory. He was delighted, therefore, to see Paul de Maner-

"My dear fellow," said Henri, who rarely denied himself a sarcasm, "since, all the same, you may some day need, like anybody else, to use discretion, and since I have much love for you—yes, I like you! Upon my word, if you only wanted a thousand-franc note to keep you from blowing your brains out, you would find it here, for we haven't yet done any business of that sort, eh, Paul? If you had to fight to-morrow, I would measure the ground and load the pistols, so that you might be killed according to rule. In short, if anybody besides myself took it into his head to say ill of you in your absence, he would have to deal with the somewhat nasty gentleman who walks in my shoes—there's what I call a friendship beyond question. Well, my good fellow, if you should ever have need of discretion, understand that there are two sorts of discretion—the active and the negative. Negative discretion is that of fools who make use of silence, negation, an air of refusal, the discretion of locked doors—mere impotence! Active discretion proceeds by affirmation. Suppose at the club this evening I were to say: 'Upon my word of honor the golden-eyed was not worth all she cost me!' Everybody would exclaim when I was gone: 'Did you hear that fop De Marsay, who tried to make us believe that he has already had the girl of the golden eyes? It's his way of trying to disembarrass himself of his rivals; he's no simpleton.' But such a ruse is vulgar and dangerous. However gross a folly one utters, there are always idiots to be found who will believe it. The best form of discretion is that of women when they want to take the change out of their husbands. It consists in compromising a woman with whom we are not concerned, or whom we do not love, in order to save the honor of the one whom we love well enough to respect. It is what is called the *woman-screen*. . . . Ah! here is Laurent. What have you got for us?"

"Some Ostend oysters, Monsieur le Comte."

"You will know some day, Paul, how amusing it is to make a fool of the world by depriving it of the secret of one's affections. I derive an immense pleasure in escaping from the

stupid jurisdiction of the crowd, which knows neither what it wants, nor what one wants of it, which takes the means for the end, and by turns curses and adores, elevates and destroys! What a delight to impose emotions on it and receive none from it, to tame it, never to obey it. If one may ever be proud of anything, is it not of a self-acquired power, of which one is at once the cause and effect, the principle and the result? Well, no man knows what I love, nor what I wish. Perhaps what I have loved, or what I may have wished will be known, as a drama which is accomplished is known; but to let my game be seen—weakness, mistake! I know nothing more despicable than strength outwitted by cunning. Can I initiate myself with a laugh into the ambassador's part, if indeed diplomacy is as difficult as life? I doubt it. Have you any ambition? Would you like to become something?"

"But, Henri, you are laughing at me—as though I were not sufficiently mediocre to arrive at anything."

"Good, Paul! If you go on laughing at yourself, you will

At this moment, then, De Marsay perceived that he had been fooled by the girl of the golden eyes, seeing, as he did, in perspective, all that night of which the delights had been poured upon him by degrees until they had ended by flooding him in torrents. He could read, at last, that page in effect so brilliant, divine its hidden meaning. The purely physical innocence of Paquita, the bewilderment of her joy, certain words, obscure at first, but now clear, which had escaped her in the midst of that joy, all proved to him that he had posed for another person. As no social corruption was unknown to him, as he professed a complete indifference towards all perversities, and believed them to be justified on the simple ground that they were capable of satisfaction, he was not startled at vice, he knew it as one knows a friend, but he was wounded at having served as sustenance for it. If his presumption was right, he had been outraged in the most sensitive part of him. The mere suspicion filled him with fury, he broke out with the roar of a tiger who has been the sport of a deer, the cry of a tiger which united a brute's strength with the intelligence of the demon.

"I say, what is the matter with you?" asked Paul.

"Nothing!"

"I should be sorry, if you were to be asked whether you had anything against me and were to reply with a *nothing* like that! It would be a sure case of fighting the next day."

"I fight no more duels," said De Marsay.

"That seems to me even more tragical. Do you assassinate, then?"

"You travesty words. I execute."

"My dear friend," said Paul, "your jokes are of a very sombre color this morning."

"What would you have? Pleasure ends in cruelty. Why? I don't know, and am not sufficiently curious to try and find out. . . . These cigars are excellent. Give your friend some tea. Do you know, Paul, I live a brute's life? It should be time to choose oneself a destiny, to employ one's powers on something which makes life worth living. Life is a

not complain, I shall say nothing; and your desertion need cause you no remorse, for one day passed with you, only one day, in which I have had you before my eyes, will be worth all my life to me. But if I stay here, I am lost."

"I cannot leave Paris, little one!" replied Henri. "I do not belong to myself, I am bound by a vow to the fortune of several persons who stand to me, as I do to them. But I can place you in a refuge in Paris, where no human power can reach you."

"No," she said, "you forget the power of woman."

Never did phrase uttered by human voice express terror more absolutely.

"What could reach you, then, if I put myself between you and the world?"

"Poison!" she said. "Doña Concha suspects you already . . . and," she resumed, letting the tears fall and glisten on her cheeks, "it is easy enough to see I am no longer the same. Well, if you abandon me to the fury of the monster

She offered De Marsay some letters, in which the young man saw, with surprise, strange figures, similar to those of a rebus, traced in blood, and illustrating phrases full of passion.

"But," he cried, marveling at these hieroglyphics created by the alertness of jealousy, "you are in the power of an infernal genius?"

"Infernal," she repeated.

"But how, then, were you able to get out?"

"Ah!" she said, "that was my ruin. I drove Doña Concha to choose between the fear of immediate death and anger to be. I had the curiosity of a demon, I wished to break the bronze circle which they had described between creation and me, I wished to see what young people were like, for I knew nothing of man except the Marquis and Cristemio. Our coachman and the lackey who accompanies us are old men. . . ."

"But you were not always thus shut up? Your health . . . ?"

"Ah," she answered, "we used to walk, but it was at night and in the country, by the side of the Seine, away from people."

"Are you not proud of being loved like that?"

"No," she said, "no longer. However full it be, this hidden life is but darkness in comparison with the light."

"What do you call the light?"

"Thee, my lovely Adolphe! Thee, for whom I would give my life. All the passionate things that have been told me, and that I have inspired, I feel for thee! For a certain time I understood nothing of existence, but now I know what love is, and hitherto I have been the loved one only; for myself, I did not love. I would give up everything for you, take me away. If you like, take me as a toy, but let me be near you until you break me."

"You will have no regrets?"

"Not one!" she said, letting him read her eyes, whose golden tint was pure and clear.

"Am I the favored one?" said Henri to himself. If he suspected the truth, he was ready at that time to pardon the offence in view of a love so single minded. "I shall soon see," he thought.

If Paquita owed him no account of the past, yet the least recollection of it became in his eyes a crime. He had therefore the sombre strength to withhold a portion of his thought, to study her, even while abandoning himself to the most enticing pleasures that ever peri descended from the skies had devised for her beloved.

Paquita seemed to have been created for love by a particular effort of nature. In a night her feminine genius had made the most rapid progress. Whatever might be the power of this young man, and his indifference in the matter of pleasures, in spite of his satiety of the previous night, he found in the girl with the golden eyes that seraglio which a loving woman knows how to create and which a man never refuses. Paquita responded to that passion which is felt by

the same time, urged beyond that line where the soul is mistress over herself, he lost himself in those delicious limboes, which the vulgar call so foolishly "the imaginary regions." He was tender, kind, and confidential. He affected Paquita almost to madness.

"Why should not we go to Sorrento, to Nice, to Chiavari, and pass all our life so? Will you?" he asked of Paquita, in a penetrating voice.

"Was there need to say to me: 'Will you'?" she cried. "Have I a will? I am nothing apart from you, except in so far as I am a pleasure for you. If you would choose a retreat worthy of us, Asia is the only country where love can unfold his wings. . . ."

"You are right," answered Henri. "Let us go to the Indies, there where spring is eternal, where the earth grows only flowers, where man can display the magnificence of kings and none shall say him nay, as in the foolish lands where they would realize the dull chimera of equality. Let us go to the country where one lives in the midst of a nation of slaves, where the sun shines ever on a palace which is always white, where the air sheds perfumes, the birds sing of love, and where, when one can love no more, one dies. . . ."

"And where one dies together!" said Paquita. "But do not let us start to-morrow, let us start this moment . . . take Cristemio."

"Faith! pleasure is the fairest climax of life. Let us go to Asia; but to start, my child, one needs much gold, and to have gold one must set one's affairs in order."

She understood no part of these ideas.

"Gold! There is a pile of it here—as high as that," she said, holding up her hand.

"It is not mine."

"What does that matter?" she went on; "if we have need of it let us take it."

"It does not belong to you."

"Belong!" she repeated. "Have you not taken me? When we have taken it, it will belong to us."

He gave a laugh.

in a momentary resignation. Moreover, he had already thought, in spite of the vehemence of his anger, that it was scarcely prudent to compromise himself with the law by killing this girl on the spur of the moment, before he had arranged the murder in such a manner as should insure his impunity.

"My beloved," went on Paquita, "speak to me; do not leave me without one loving farewell! I would not keep in my heart the terror which you have just inspired in it. . . . Will you speak?" she said, stamping her foot with anger.

De Marsay, for all reply, gave her a glance, which signified so plainly, *"You must die!"* that Paquita threw herself upon him.

"Ah, well, you want to kill me! . . . If my death can give you any pleasure—kill me!"

She made a sign to Cristemio, who withdrew his foot from the body of the young man, and retired without letting his face show that he had formed any opinion, good or bad, with regard to Paquita.

"That is a man," said De Marsay, pointing to the mulatto, with a sombre gesture. "There is no devotion like the devotion which obeys in friendship, and does not stop to weigh motives. In that man you possess a true friend."

"I will give him you, if you like," she answered; "he will serve you with the same devotion that he has for me, if I so instruct him."

She waited for a word of recognition, and went on with an accent replete with tenderness:

"Adolphe, give me then one kind word! . . . It is nearly day."

Henri did not answer. The young man had one sorry quality, for one considers as something great everything which resembles strength, and often men invent extravagances. Henri knew not how to pardon. That *returning upon itself* which is one of the soul's graces, was a non-existent sense for him. The ferocity of the Northern man, with which the English blood is deeply tainted, had been transmitted to him

by his father. He was inexorable both in his good and evil impulses. Paquita's exclamation had been all the more horrible to him, in that it had dethroned him from the sweetest triumph which had ever flattered his man's vanity. Hope, love, and every emotion had been exalted with him, all had lit up within his heart and his intelligence, then these torches illuminating his life had been extinguished by a cold wind. Paquita, in her stupefaction of grief, had only strength enough to give the signal for departure.

"What is the use of that!" she said, throwing away the bandage. "If he does not love me, if he hates me, it is all over."

She waited for one look, did not obtain it, and fell, half dead. The mulatto cast a glance at Henri, so horribly significant, that, for the first time in his life, the young man, to whom no one denied the gift of rare courage, trembled. *"If you do not love her well, if you give her the least pain, I will kill you."* Such was the sense of that brief gaze. De Marsay

"Where is the gentleman going to?" asked the coachman.

De Marsay was driven to the house of Paul de Manerville. For more than a week Henri was away from home, and no one could discover either what he did during this period, nor where he stayed. This retreat saved him from the fury of the mulatto and caused the ruin of the charming creature who had placed all her hope in him whom she loved as never human heart had loved on this earth before. On the last day of the week, about eleven o'clock at night, Henri drove up in a carriage to the little gate in the garden of the Hotel San-Réal. Four men accompanied him. The driver was evidently one of his friends, for he stood up on his box, like a man who was to listen, an attentive sentinel, for the least sound. One of the other three took his stand outside the gate in the street; the second waited in the garden, leaning against the wall; the last, who carried in his hand a bunch of keys, accompanied De Marsay.

"Henri," said his companion to him, "we are betrayed."

"By whom, my good Ferragus?"*

"They are not all asleep," replied the chief of the Devourers; "it is absolutely certain that some one in the house has neither eaten nor drunk. . . . Look! see that light!"

"We have a plan of the house; from where does it come?"

"I need no plan to know," replied Ferragus; "it comes from the room of the Marquise."

"Ah," cried De Marsay, "no doubt she arrived from London to-day. The woman has robbed me even of my revenge! But if she has anticipated me, my good Gratien, we will give her up to the law."

"Listen, listen! . . . The thing is settled," said Ferragus to Henri.

The two friends listened intently, and heard some feeble cries which might have aroused pity in the breast of a tiger.

"Your marquise did not think the sound would escape by the chimney," said the chief of the Devourers, with the laugh of a critic, enchanted to detect a fault in a work of merit.

* Vid. Translator's Preface.

"We alone, we know how to provide for every contingency," said Henri. "Wait for me. I want to see what is going on upstairs—I want to know how their domestic quarrels are managed. By God! I believe she is roasting her at a slow fire."

De Marsay lightly scaled the stairs, with which he was familiar, and recognized the passage leading to the boudoir. When he opened the door he experienced the involuntary shudder which the sight of bloodshed gives to the most determined of men. The spectacle which was offered to his view was, moreover, in more than one respect astonishing to him. The Marquise was a woman; she had calculated her vengeance with that perfection of perfidy which distinguishes the weaker animals. She had dissimulated her anger in order to assure herself of the crime before she punished it.

"Too late, my beloved!" said Paquita, in her death agony, casting her pale eyes upon De Marsay.

The girl of the golden eyes expired in a bath of blood. The great illumination of candles, a delicate perfume which was

with bites, many of which were bleeding, and her torn dress revealed her in a state of semi-nudity, with the scratches on her breasts. She was sublime so. Her head, eager and maddened, exhaled the odor of blood. Her panting mouth was open, and her nostrils were not sufficient for her breath. There are certain animals who fall upon their enemy in their rage, do it to death, and seem in the tranquillity of victory to have forgotten it. There are others who prowl around their victim, who guard it in fear lest it should be taken away from them, and who, like the Achilles of Homer, drag their enemy by the feet nine times round the walls of Troy. The Marquise was like that. She did not see Henri. In the first place, she was too secure of her solitude to be afraid of witnesses; and, secondly, she was too intoxicated with warm blood, too excited with the fray, too exalted, to take notice of the whole of Paris, if Paris had formed a circle round her. A thunderbolt would not have disturbed her. She had not even heard Paquita's last sigh, and believed that the dead girl could still hear her.

"Die without confessing!" she said. "Go down to hell, monster of ingratitude; belong to no one but the fiend. For the blood you gave him you owe me all your own! Die, die, suffer a thousand deaths! I have been too kind—I was only a moment killing you. I should have made you experience all the tortures that you have bequeathed to me. I—I shall live! I shall live in misery. I have no one left to love but God!"

She gazed at her.

"She is dead!" she said to herself, after a pause, in a violent reaction. "Dead! Oh, I shall die of grief!"

The Marquise was throwing herself upon the divan, stricken with a despair which deprived her of speech, when this movement brought her in view of Henri de Marsay.

"Who are you?" she asked, rushing at him with her dagger raised.

Henri caught her arm, and thus they could contemplate each other face to face. A horrible surprise froze the blood in their veins, and their limbs quivered like those of fright-

[illegible] the two Menœchmi had not been m
[illegible] they uttered the same phrase:
[illegible] been your father!"
[illegible] drooped in affirmation.
[illegible] the blood," said Henri, pointing

[illegible] guilty as it is possible to be," rep
[illegible] Porrabéril, and she threw herself u
[illegible] giving vent to a cry of despair. "P
[illegible] bring thee to life again! I was wr
[illegible]! Dead! and I live! I—I am the m

[illegible] the horrible face of the mother of Paq

[illegible] to tell me that you never sold her to m
[illegible] Marquise. "I know why you have left y
[illegible] you twice over. Hold your peace."
[illegible] bag of gold from the ebony cabinet, and th
[illegible] at the old woman's feet. The chink

"But whom have you," said Henri, looking at the girl of the golden eyes, "who will help you to remove the traces of this fantasy which the law would not overlook?"

"I have her mother," replied the Marquise, designating the Georgian, to whom she made a sign to remain.

"We shall meet again," said Henri, who was thinking anxiously of his friends and felt that it was time to leave.

"No, brother," she said, "we shall not meet again. I am going back to Spain to enter the Convent of *los Dolores*."

"You are too young yet, too lovely," said Henri, taking her in his arms and giving her a kiss.

"Good-bye," she said; "there is no consolation when you have lost that which has seemed to you the infinite."

A week later Paul de Manerville met De Marsay in the Tuileries, on the Terrasse des Feuillants.

"Well, what has become of our beautiful girl of the golden eyes, you rascal?"

"She is dead."

"What of?"

"Consumption."

PARIS, *March* 1834—*April* 1835.

FATHER GORIOT

AND OTHER STORIES

INTRODUCTION*

Père Goriot appeared first in the *Revue de Paris,* Decem- 14 and 28, 1834, and January 28 and February 11, 1835. ras issued in two volumes in 1835, a second edition appear- within the year. In 1843, with the previous seven chapter sions suppressed, it entered the "Scènes de la Vie isienne" of the "Comedy." In his posthumous notes Bal- assigned it to the "Scènes de la Vie Privée." As we have ady seen, this novel is closely affiliated with "Illusions dues" and "Splendeurs et Misères," in which Vautrin and tignac have figured. It introduces the latter personage Bianchon to the "Comedy," in which they are so con- uous. Mme. de Beauséant and the Marquis d'Ajuda are ady familiar. (See "La Femme Abandonnée.") M. and e. de Nucingen have played many parts; M. and Mme. Restaud have been seen in "Gobseck," where the affair of diamonds is described. Maxime de Trailles is now well wn, especially from the last part of "Béatrix." The llefers recall "L'Auberge Rouge." Poiret and La honneau have been seen in "Splendeurs et Misères," and former recalls "Les Employés." Colonel Franchessini will pear in "Le Député d'Arcis." Gondureau is Bibi-Lupin Fil-de-Soie is Sélérier (see "Splendeurs et Misères"). tignac's family is met in "Illusions Perdues"; his brother riel has played a part in "Le Curé de Village." Père

*Copyright, 1900, by Thomas Y. Crowell & Company.

Goriot, Mme. Vauquer, and, of course, some of the less important characters are not met elsewhere. Two dramas were soon drawn from the novel, which, it is interesting to note, was dedicated to that Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire of whom Balzac was in some respects a follower.

Les Comédiens sans le Savoir appeared first in *Le Courrier Français,* April 14-24, 1846. The same year it entered the "Scènes de la Vie Parisienne" of the "Comedy." In 1848 it appeared in two volumes, along with "Gillette" ("Le Chef-d'Œuvre Inconnu"), "Le Rentier," and "El Verdugo," under the title of "Le Provincial à Paris." In this form and in the newspaper it was divided into numerous chapters since suppressed. The sketch contains fragments of three articles previously published—see Lovenjoul. It is needless to comment upon such well known characters as Léon de Lora, the landscape painter; Bixiou, Rastignac, Canalis, M. de Trailles, Jenny Cadine, etc. Mme. Fontaine ("Le Cousin Pons") and

the end of September, 1834, he wrote to his mother that he would send her the manuscript of "Père Goriot," which was "precious, unique," and must be preserved with the greatest care. He evidently sent only a portion of the manuscript—if he sent any, for he was constantly deceiving himself about his progress in composition; but he had written enough to feel that it was "a work still more beautiful than *Eugénie Grandet*." At least he was more contented with it. In October he wrote Mme. Hanska that while in Touraine he had begun a "great book—*Le Père Goriot*"—in which he had made use of her way of pronouncing "tilleuls" (lindens)—only he had put the word into the mouth of "a horrible old woman" (Mme. Vauquer). In December he wrote the Polish Countess that his book was beautiful but horribly sad. In order to make it complete he had to exhibit a "moral sewer"—which was disgusting enough. At the beginning of the next year (1835) the praise of the public produces in him a natural reaction. The stupid Parisians are crazy over "Père Goriot." "Here is *Le Père Goriot* put above everything else." His new story is of "the *genre* of *L'Absolu*, although the two works are as different as China and Greenland. They are of the same power." Only in his "desire to conquer twenty-five days of liberty" he has "done *Père Goriot* in twenty-five days." It will bring him in seven thousand francs. On January 26 he announced that the story had been finished that day. Six weeks later he wrote: "There is no success comparable to that of *Goriot*. This stupid Paris that neglected 'The Absolute' has just bought the first edition of *Goriot*." These twelve hundred copies so speedily disposed of—*avant les annonces*—would be followed by two other editions already in the press.

It is quite obvious from these extracts that Balzac fully appreciated the power and value of "Père Goriot" while he was writing it, and that like many other authors he began to be less fond and proud of it only when the public undertook to

put it above other works in the success of which he took a vivid interest. He must have known well enough that "Père Goriot" was a much stronger story than "La Recherche de l'Absolu." On the other hand it is equally plain that the novel stands one of the best tests that can be applied in order to determine whether or not a literary composition is a masterpiece. It attained immediate contemporary success in France, which was soon followed up by success in foreign countries; and both at home and abroad the lapse of years has brought no diminution of praise. Gray's "Elegy" and Poe's "Raven," although poems, are scarcely more secure of immortality than this novel, which has been so often called the French "King Lear."

The comparison with what is perhaps Shakespeare's grandest work is natural and not so disadvantageous to Balzac as might at first be imagined. As the poet of the terrible Shakespeare has no rival in Balzac, but as the expounder of

comparison is in its favor. It has been called his most unattackable book. Yet he has been accused of exaggerating Vautrin's greatness, and it might be fairly contended that "Eugénie Grandet" is fully as unattackable. Besides "Père Goriot" contains many pages devoted to fashionable Parisian life, and it would appear that the critics who fault him for his work in this vein elsewhere ought not, if they would avoid inconsistency, to lapse into silence when "Père Goriot" is under discussion. Again, it seems clear that for sheer power no book in the "Comedy" surpasses "Cousine Bette," and it is at least a question whether "Splendeurs et Misères," with its wonderful plot and its numerous and well managed characters, is not, as M. Barrière puts it, the capital work of the "Parisian Scenes," if not of the entire "Comedy."

But, as has been already said in connection with the last mentioned work, there is really no way of determining which is the greatest of Balzac's novels. "Père Goriot," like "Eugénie Grandet," has the *cachet* of the infinite, but it is a much more complex story than the latter, and this complexity has been both praised and blamed. It may be doubted whether the former novel is as perfect a work of art as the latter, or whether the latter is as variedly interesting as the former. The Parisian story describes a larger segment of life and thus appeals to more readers; but when all is said its greater popularity is almost the only reason for placing it at the head of Balzac's masterpieces that cannot be balanced by counter-arguments worthy of consideration.

Let us now, however, turn to the wonderful book itself. Where outside of Balzac shall we find such a realistic description as that of the *Pension Vauquer?* Where shall we find subtler analysis than in the passage that explains why so many of us are suspicious of persons we know and over-confiding with perfect strangers? Where shall we get more authentic pictures of student and *pension* life, or what is

more realistic than the bandying of slang and jokes at Mme. Vauquer's table? Who better than Balzac has described the aspirations of a young man to conquer society and the world? Who has better analyzed the feelings of a woman like Mme. de Nucingen in the transition period between the old love and the new?

As for the characters, their life-likeness would suffice to prove the high rank of the book among Balzac's mature works. There is hardly an indistinct figure, even among the minor personages. Sylvie and Christophe, Poiret and la Michonneau, Mme. Vauquer and Mme. Couture, the gentle Victorine Taillefer, all stand out vividly. Perhaps we do not learn to know and care for Rastignac as much as we should know and care for the man who is sometimes called the hero of the *Comédie Humaine;* but, after all, the streak of hardness in his character which more, perhaps, than his probity, saved him from Vautrin's clutches, accounts for our mixed feelings to-

him from a weak-witted unfortunate save his knowledge of the grain trade and his boundless affection for his daughters, which makes him both resolute and acute when their interests are at stake. But is Balzac to be blamed for this? Are not many successful business men preternaturally dull outside their limited sphere, and does not a great passion produce infinite transformations of character? Is not the pathos and power of the story enhanced by making Goriot the butt of the *pension*, the slave of his selfish daughters, and the victim of his limitless passion? Could such a passion have any other ending than the funeral paid for by the impecunious students? And as regards the use of exceptional characters, are not Don Quixote and Parson Adams—both of whom, like Goriot, preserve our respect, no matter what happens to them—exceptional characters? And are not Lear and Hamlet?

Vautrin has been, perhaps, sufficiently discussed in connection with "Splendeurs et Misères." In the present novel his animal spirits and verve, his grandiose schemes, his coarser side appear to be accentuated. Here he seems to do more talking than acting. We learn, however, that he was capable of assuming the responsibility for another's crime and of desiring the happiness of poor Victorine, even if he did wish to corrupt Rastignac. Probably he was shrewd enough to know that the latter would inevitably be corrupted in some way or other. His true greatness comes out in the scene in which he controls himself before the *gens d'armes*, although one does wonder how he could have gone into the dining-room seemingly unsuspicious of the fact that he had been drugged. The explanation offered of his sudden seizure might have satisfied any other man, but Vautrin should probably have been more on his guard. Still this is only a trifle. Vautrin is on the whole a remarkable character whom some of us regard as quite worthy of the pains Balzac spent upon him. We feel at his arrest much as the Vauquer boarders did when they forced

La Michonneau to leave the *pension*. Others may, of course, object to any glorification of crime by the representation of a criminal as a truly great man; but even such severe critics will hardly venture to deny that "Père Goriot" as a whole is one of the most powerful novels ever written.

The descent from "Père Goriot" to "Les Comédiens sans la Savior" is not, like that of Avernus, easy. Still, the humorous sketch is remarkable for some good pictures of Parisian notabilities of all sorts, and is very light of touch considering the period at which it was written. The country cousin is well managed, especially at the end, and Léon de Lora and Bixiou have not lost the sprightliness they respectively exhibited in "Un Début dans la Vie" and "Les Employés." Vauvinet is particularly worthy of attention because he is an interesting addition to Balzac's gallery of usurers, and Marius is an unimpeachable representative of the loquacious barber tribe. Mme. Nourrisson also holds her own as a loathsome

traveler, like all of his kind, makes conversation-capital out of his adventure. The reader will not fail to observe further that a fresh use of Touraine has meant an opportunity for another fine passage in its praise from its most loyal and famous son.*

W. P. TRENT.

* It should be remarked that "Les Comédiens sans le Savoir," like the second part of "Illusions Perdues," being descriptive of the adventures of a provincial at Paris, is set in intentional contrast with "L'Illustre Gaudissart," which describes the fortunes of a Parisian in the provinces. See also portions of "Un Ménage de Garçon."

FATHER GORIOT

To the great and illustrious Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, a token of miration for his works and genius.

De Balzac.

ME. VAUQUER (*née* de Conflans) is an elderly person, who r the past forty years has kept a lodging-house in the Rue ·uve-Sainte-Geneviève, in the district that lies between the tin Quarter and the Faubourg Saint-Marcel. Her house nown in the neighborhood as the *Maison Vauquer*) re- ves men and women, old and young, and no word has ever ·n breathed against her respectable establishment; but, at : same time, it must be said that as a matter of fact no ung woman has been under her roof for thirty years, and it if a young man stays there for any length of time it a sure sign that his allowance must be of the slenderest.

1819, however, the time when this drama opens, there s an almost penniless young girl among Mme. Vauquer's arders.

That word drama has been somewhat discredited of late; has been overworked and twisted to strange uses in these ys of dolorous literature; but it must do service again re, not because this story is dramatic in the restricted ıse of the word, but because some tears may perhaps be ·d *intra et extra muros* before it is over.

Will any one without the walls of Paris understand it? is open to doubt. The only audience who could appre- ıte the results of close observation, the careful reproduc- ın of minute detail and local color, are dwellers between : heights of Montrouge and Montmartre, in a vale of

crumbling stucco [illegible] red by streams of black mud, a vale of sorrows which are real and of joys too often hollow; but this audience is so accustomed to terrible sensations, that only some unimaginable and well-nigh impossible woe could produce any lasting impression there. Now and again there are tragedies so awful and so grand by reason of the complication of virtues and vices that bring them about, that egotism and selfishness are forced to pause and are moved to pity; but the impression that they receive is like a luscious fruit, soon consumed. Civilization, like the car of Juggernaut, is scarcely stayed perceptibly in its progress by a heart less easy to break than the others that lie in its course; this also is broken, and Civilization continues on her course triumphant. And you, too, will do the like; you who with this book in your white hand will sink back among the cushions of your armchair, and say to yourself, "Perhaps this may amuse me." You will read the story of Father Goriot's secret woes, and, dining thereafter with an unspoiled appetite, will

creates a sensation; there is a grim look about the houses, a suggestion of a jail about those high garden walls. A Parisian straying into a suburb apparently composed of lodging-houses and public institutions would see poverty and dulness, old age lying down to die, and joyous youth condemned to drudgery. It is the ugliest quarter of Paris, and, it may be added, the least known. But, before all things, the Rue Neuve-Sainte-Geneviève is like a bronze frame for a picture for which the mind cannot be too well prepared by the contemplation of sad hues and sober images. Even so, step by step the daylight decreases, and the cicerone's droning voice grows hollower as the traveler descends into the Catacombs. The comparison holds good! Who shall say which is more ghastly, the sight of the bleached skulls or of dried-up human hearts?

The front of the lodging-house is at right angles to the road, and looks out upon a little garden, so that you see the side of the house in section, as it were, from the Rue Neuve-Sainte-Geneviève. Beneath the wall of the house front there lies a channel, a fathom wide, paved with cobble-stones, and beside it runs a graveled walk bordered by geraniums and oleanders and pomegranates set in great blue and white glazed earthenware pots. Access into the graveled walk is afforded by a door, above which the words MAISON VAUQUER may be read, and beneath, in rather smaller letters, *"Lodgings for both sexes, etc."*

During the day a glimpse into the garden is easily obtained through a wicket to which a bell is attached. On the opposite wall, at the further end of the graveled walk, a green marble arch was painted once upon a time by a local artist, and in this semblance of a shrine a statue representing Cupid is installed: a Parisian Cupid, so blistered and disfigured that he looks like a candidate for one of the adjacent hospitals, and might suggest an allegory to lovers of symbolism. The half-obliterated inscription on the pedestal beneath determines the date of this work of art, for

it bears witness to the widespread enthusiasm felt for Voltaire on his return to Paris in 1777:

> "Whoe'er thou art, thy master see;
> He is, or was, or ought to be."

At night the wicket gate is replaced by a solid door. The little garden is no wider than the front of the house; it is shut in between the wall of the street and the partition wall of the neighboring house. A mantle of ivy conceals the bricks and attracts the eyes of passers-by to an effect which is picturesque in Paris, for each of the walls is covered with trellised vines that yield a scanty dusty crop of fruit, and furnish besides a subject of conversation for Mme. Vauquer and her lodgers; every year the widow trembles for her vintage.

A straight path beneath the walls on either side of the garden leads to a clump of lime-trees at the further end of it; *line*-trees, as Mme. Vauquer persists in calling them, in spite of the fact that she was a de Conflans, and regardless

Behind the house a yard extends for some twenty feet, a space inhabited by a happy family of pigs, poultry, and rabbits; the wood-shed is situated on the further side, and on the wall between the wood-shed and the kitchen window hangs the meat-safe, just above the place where the sink discharges its greasy streams. The cook sweeps all the refuse out through a little door into the Rue Neuve-Sainte-Geneviève, and frequently cleanses the yard with copious supplies of water, under pain of pestilence.

The house might have been built on purpose for its present uses. Access is given by a French window to the first room on the ground floor, a sitting-room which looks out upon the street through the two barred windows already mentioned. Another door opens out of it into the dining-room, which is separated from the kitchen by the well of the staircase, the steps being constructed partly of wood, partly of tiles, which are colored and beeswaxed. Nothing can be more depressing than the sight of that sitting-room. The furniture is covered with horse hair woven in alternate dull and glossy stripes. There is a round table in the middle, with a purplish-red marble top, on which there stands, by way of ornament, the inevitable white china tea-service, covered with a half-effaced gilt network. The floor is sufficiently uneven, the wainscot rises to elbow height, and the rest of the wall space is decorated with a varnished paper, on which the principal scenes from *Télémaque* are depicted, the various classical personages being colored. The subject between the two windows is the banquet given by Calypso to the son of Ulysses, displayed thereon for the admiration of the boarders, and has furnished jokes these forty years to the young men who show themselves superior to their position by making fun of the dinners to which poverty condemns them. The hearth is always so clean and neat that it is evident that a fire is only kindled there on great occasions; the stone chimney-piece is adorned by a couple of vases filled with faded artificial flowers imprisoned under glass shades, on either side of a bluish marble clock in the very worst taste.

The first room exhales an odor for which there is no name in the language, and which should be called the *odeur de pension*. The damp atmosphere sends a chill through you as you breathe it; it has a stuffy, musty, and rancid quality; it permeates your clothing; after-dinner scents seem to be mingled in it with smells from the kitchen and scullery and the reek of a hospital. It might be possible to describe it if some one should discover a process by which to distil from the atmosphere all the nauseating elements with which it is charged by the catarrhal exhalations of every individual lodger, young or old. Yet, in spite of these stale horrors, the sitting-room is as charming and as delicately perfumed as a boudoir, when compared with the adjoining dining-room.

The paneled walls of that apartment were once painted some color, now a matter of conjecture, for the surface is incrusted with accumulated layers of grimy deposit, which cover it with fantastic outlines. A collection of dim-ribbed glass decanters, metal discs with a satin sheen on them, and piles of blue-edged earthenware plates of Touraine ware cover

good; and finally, the foot-warmers are miserable wrecks, hingeless, charred, broken away about the holes. It would be impossible to give an idea of the old, rotten, shaky, cranky, worm-eaten, halt, maimed, one-eyed, rickety, and ramshackle condition of the furniture without an exhaustive description, which would delay the progress of the story to an extent that impatient people would not pardon. The red tiles of the floor are full of depressions brought about by scouring and periodical renewings of color. In short, there is no illusory grace left to the poverty that reigns here; it is dire, parsimonious, concentrated, threadbare poverty; as yet it has not sunk into the mire, it is only splashed by it, and though not in rags as yet, its clothing is ready to drop to pieces.

This apartment is in all its glory at seven o'clock in the morning, when Mme. Vauquer's cat appears, announcing the near approach of his mistress, and jumps upon the side-boards to sniff at the milk in the bowls, each protected by a plate, while he purrs his morning greeting to the world. A moment later the widow shows her face; she is tricked out in a net cap attached to a false front set on awry, and shuffles into the room in her slipshod fashion. She is an oldish woman, with a bloated countenance, and a nose like a parrot's beak set in the middle of it; her fat little hands (she is as sleek as a church rat) and her shapeless, slouching figure are in keeping with the room that reeks of misfortune, where hope is reduced to speculate for the meanest stakes. Mme. Vauquer alone can breathe that tainted air without being disheartened by it. Her face is as fresh as a frosty morning in autumn; there are wrinkles about the eyes that vary in their expression from the set smile of a ballet-dancer to the dark, suspicious scowl of a discounter of bills; in short, she is at once the embodiment and interpretation of her lodging-house, as surely as her lodging-house implies the existence of its mistress. You can no more imagine the one without the other, than you can think of a jail without a turnkey. The unwholesome corpulence of the little woman is produced by the life she leads, just as typhus fever is bred in the tainted

air of a hospital. The very knitted woolen petticoat that she wears beneath a skirt made of an old gown, with the wadding protruding through the rents in the material, is a sort of epitome of the sitting-room, the dining-room, and the little garden; it discovers the cook; it foreshadows the lodgers—the picture of the house is completed by the portrait of its mistress.

Mme. Vauquer at the age of fifty is like all women who "have seen a deal of trouble." She has the glassy eyes and innocent air of a trafficker in flesh and blood, who will wax virtuously indignant to obtain a higher price for her services, but who is quite ready to betray a Georges or a Pichegru, if a Georges or a Pichegru were in hiding and still to be betrayed, or for any other expedient that may alleviate her lot. Still, "she is a good woman at bottom," said the lodgers, who believed that the widow was wholly dependent upon the money that they paid her, and sympathized when they heard her cough and groan like one of themselves.

What had M. Vauquer been? The lady was never very ex-

'he two sets of rooms on the second floor were respectively ıpied by an old man named Poiret and a man of forty hereabouts, the wearer of a black wig and dyed whiskers, ı gave out that he was a retired merchant, and was adseed as M. Vautrin. Two of the four rooms on the third r were also let—one to an elderly spinster, a Mlle. Michonu, and the other to a retired manufacturer of vermicelli, ian paste and starch, who allowed the others to address ı as "Father Goriot." The remaining rooms were allotted rarious birds of passage, to impecunious students, who, "Father Goriot" and Mlle. Michonneau, could only musforty-five francs a month to pay for their board and lodg- . Mme. Vauquer had little desire for lodgers of this sort; y ate too much bread, and she only took them in default better.

ıt that time one of the rooms was tenanted by a law stut, a young man from the neighborhood of Angoulême, of a large family who pinched and starved themselves pare twelve hundred francs a year for him. Misfortune accustomed Eugène de Rastignac, for that was his name, work. He belonged to the number of young men who w as children that their parents' hopes are centered on m, and deliberately prepare themselves for a great career, ordinating their studies from the first to this end, carey watching the indications of the course of events, calcung the probable turn that affairs will take, that they may the first to profit by them. But for his observant cuity, and the skill with which he managed to introduce ıself into the salons of Paris, this story would not have n colored by the tones of truth which it certainly owes ıim, for they are entirely due to his penetrating sagacity desire to fathom the mysteries of an appalling condition things, which was concealed as carefully by the victim y those who had brought it to pass.

Above the third story there was a garret where the linen hung to dry, and a couple of attics. Christophe, the n-of-all-work, slept in one, and Sylvie, the stout cook, in

the other. Beside the seven inmates thus enumerated, taking one year with another, some eight law or medical students dined in the house, as well as two or three regular comers who lived in the neighborhood. There were usually eighteen people at dinner, and there was room, if need be, for twenty at Mme. Vauquer's table; at breakfast, however, only the seven lodgers appeared. It was almost like a family party. Every one came down in dressing-gown and slippers, and the conversation usually turned on anything that had happened the evening before; comments on the dress or appearance of the dinner contingent were exchanged in friendly confidence.

These seven lodgers were Mme. Vauquer's spoiled children. Among them she distributed, with astronomical precision, the exact proportion of respect and attention due to the varying amounts they paid for their board. One single consideration influenced all these human beings thrown together by chance. The two second-floor lodgers only paid seventy-two

brought to a close or still in progress are foreshadowed by the sight of such actors as these, not the dramas that are played before the footlights and against a background of painted canvas, but dumb dramas of life, frost-bound dramas that sere hearts like fire, dramas that do not end with the actors' lives.

Mlle. Michonneau, that elderly young lady, screened her weak eyes from the daylight by a soiled green silk shade with a rim of brass, an object fit to scare away the Angel of Pity himself. Her shawl, with its scanty, draggled fringe, might have covered a skeleton, so meagre and angular was the form beneath it. Yet she must have been pretty and shapely once. What corrosive had destroyed the feminine outlines? Was it trouble, or vice, or greed? Had she loved too well? Had she been a second-hand clothes dealer, a frequenter of the backstairs of great houses, or had she been merely a courtesan? Was she expiating the flaunting triumphs of a youth overcrowded with pleasures by an old age in which she was shunned by every passer-by? Her vacant gaze sent a chill through you; her shriveled face seemed like a menace. Her voice was like the shrill, thin note of the grasshopper sounding from the thicket when winter is at hand. She said that she had nursed an old gentleman, ill of catarrh of the bladder, and left to die by his children, who thought that he had nothing left. His bequest to her, a life annuity of a thousand francs, was periodically disputed by his heirs, who mingled slander with their persecutions. In spite of the ravages of conflicting passions, her face retained some traces of its former fairness and fineness of tissue, some vestiges of the physical charms of her youth still survived.

M. Poiret was a sort of automaton. He might be seen any day sailing like a gray shadow along the walks of the Jardin des Plantes, on his head a shabby cap, a cane with an old yellow ivory handle in the tips of his thin fingers; the outspread skirts of his threadbare overcoat failed to conceal his meagre figure: his breeches hung loosely on his shrunken limbs; the thin, blue-stockinged legs trembled like those of a

Sainte-Geneviève, which forms a background to this picture; but her face was young, there was youthfulness in her voice and elasticity in her movements. This young misfortune was not unlike a shrub, newly planted in an uncongenial soil, where its leaves have already begun to wither. The outlines of her figure, revealed by her dress of the simplest and cheapest materials, were also youthful. There was the same kind of charm about her too slender form, her faintly colored face and light-brown hair, that modern poets find in mediæval statuettes; and a sweet expression, a look of Christian resignation in the dark gray eyes. She was pretty by force of contrast; if she had been happy, she would have been charming. Happiness is the poetry of woman, as the toilette is her tinsel. If the delightful excitement of a ball had made the pale face glow with color; if the delights of a luxurious life had brought the color to the wan cheeks that were slightly hollowed already; if love had put light into the sad eyes, then Victorine might have ranked among the fairest; but she lacked the two things which create woman a second time—pretty dresses and love-letters.

A book might have been made of her story. Her father was persuaded that he had sufficient reason for declining to acknowledge her, and allowed her a bare six hundred francs a year; he had further taken measures to disinherit his daughter, and had converted all his real estate into personalty, that he might leave it undivided to his son. Victorine's mother had died broken-hearted in Mme. Couture's house; and the latter, who was a near relation, had taken charge of the little orphan. Unluckily, the widow of the commissary-general to the armies of the Republic had nothing in the world but her jointure and her widow's pension, and some day she might be obliged to leave the helpless, inexperienced girl to the mercy of the world. The good soul, therefore, took Victorine to mass every Sunday, and to confession once a fortnight, thinking that, in any case, she would bring up her ward to be devout. She was right; religion offered a solution of the problem of the young girl's future. The poor

which proved the father who refused to acknowledge her. Once every year she tried to see him to deliver her mother's message of forgiveness, but every year hitherto she had knocked at that door in vain; her father was inexorable. Her brother, her only means of communication, had not come to see her for four years, and had sent her no assistance; yet she prayed to God to unseal her father's eyes and to soften her brother's heart, and no accusations mingled with her prayers. Mme. Couture and Mme. Vauquer exhausted the vocabulary of abuse, and failed to find words that did justice to the banker's iniquitous conduct; but while they heaped execrations on the millionaire, Victorine's words were as gentle as the moan of the wounded dove, and affection found expression even in the cry drawn from her by pain.

Eugène de Rastignac was a thoroughly southern type; he had a fair complexion, blue eyes, black hair. In his figure, manner, and his whole bearing it was easy to see that he either came of a noble family, or that, from his earliest childhood, he had been gently bred. If he was careful of his wardrobe,

unscrew it, take it to pieces, file it, oil and clean and set it in order, and put it back in its place again: "I am an old hand at it," he used to say. Not only so, he knew all about ships, the sea, France, foreign countries, men, business, law, great houses and prisons,—there was nothing that he did not know. If any one complained rather more than usual, he would offer his services at once. He had several times lent money to Mme. Vauquer, or to the boarders; but, somehow, those whom he obliged felt that they would sooner face death than fail to repay him; a certain resolute look, sometimes seen on his face, inspired fear of him, for all his appearance of easy good-nature. In the way he spat there was an imperturbable coolness which seemed to indicate that this was a man who would not stick at a crime to extricate himself from a false position. His eyes, like those of a pitiless judge, seemed to go to the very bottom of all questions, to read all natures, all feelings and thoughts. His habit of life was very regular; he usually went out after breakfast, returning in time for dinner, and disappeared for the rest of the evening, letting himself in about midnight with a latch key, a privilege that Mme. Vauquer accorded to no other boarder. But then he was on very good terms with the widow; he used to call her "mamma," and put his arm round her waist, a piece of flattery perhaps not appreciated to the full! The worthy woman might imagine this to be an easy feat; but, as a matter of fact, no arm but Vautrin's was long enough to encircle her.

It was a characteristic trait of his generously to pay fifteen francs a month for the cup of coffee with a dash of brandy in it, which he took after dinner. Less superficial observers than young men engulfed by the whirlpool of Parisian life, or old men, who took no interest in anything that did not directly concern them, would not have stopped short at the vaguely unsatisfactory impression that Vautrin made upon them. He knew or guessed the concerns of every one about him; but none of them had been able to penetrate his thoughts, or to discover his occupation. He had deliberately made his apparent good-nature, his unfailing readiness to

oblige, and his high spirits into a barrier between himself and the rest of them, but not seldom he gave glimpses of appalling depths of character. He seemed to delight in scourging the upper classes of society with the lash of his tongue, to take pleasure in convicting it of inconsistency, in mocking at law and order with some grim jest worthy of Juvenal, as if some grudge against the social system rankled in him, as if there were some mystery carefully hidden away in his life.

Mlle. Taillefer felt attracted, perhaps unconsciously, by the strength of the one man, and the good looks of the other; her stolen glances and secret thoughts were divided between them; but neither of them seemed to take any notice of her, although some day a chance might alter her position, and she would be a wealthy heiress. For that matter, there was not a soul in the house who took any trouble to investigate the various chronicles of misfortunes, real or imaginary, re-

charms for her, and for her alone. Those cells belonged to her. She fed those convicts condemned to penal servitude for life, and her authority was recognized among them. Where else in Paris would they have found wholesome food in sufficient quantity at the prices she charged them, and rooms which they were at liberty to make, if not exactly elegant or comfortable, at any rate clean and healthy? If she had committed some flagrant act of injustice, the victim would have borne it in silence.

Such a gathering contained, as might have been expected, the elements out of which a complete society might be constructed. And, as in a school, as in the world itself, there was among the eighteen men and women who met round the dinner table a poor creature, despised by all the others, condemned to be the butt of all their jokes. At the beginning of Eugène de Rastignac's second twelvemonth, this figure suddenly started out into bold relief against the background of human forms and faces among which the law student was yet to live for another two years to come. This laughing-stock was the retired vermicelli-merchant, Father Goriot, upon whose face a painter, like the historian, would have concentrated all the light in his picture.

How had it come about that the boarders regarded him with a half-malignant contempt? Why did they subject the oldest among their number to a kind of persecution, in which there was mingled some pity, but no respect for his misfortunes? Had he brought it upon himself by some eccentricity or absurdity, which is less easily forgiven or forgotten than more serious defects? The question strikes at the root of many a social injustice. Perhaps it is only human nature to inflict suffering on anything that will endure suffering, whether by reason of its genuine humility, or indifference, or sheer helplessness. Do we not, one and all, like to feel our strength even at the expense of some one or of something? The poorest sample of humanity, the street arab, will pull the bell handle at every street door in bitter weather, and scramble up to write his name on the unsullied marble of a monument.

In the year 1813, at the age of sixty-nine or thereabouts, "Father Goriot" had sold his business and retired—to Mme. Vauquer's boarding-house. When he first came there he had taken the rooms now occupied by Mme. Couture; he had paid twelve hundred francs a year like a man to whom five louis more or less was a mere trifle. For him Mme. Vauquer had made various improvements in the three rooms destined for his use, in consideration of a certain sum paid in advance, so it was said, for the miserable furniture, that is to say, for some yellow cotton curtains, a few chairs of stained wood covered with Utrecht velvet, several wretched colored prints in frames, and wall papers that a little suburban tavern would have disdained. Possibly it was the careless generosity with which Father Goriot allowed himself to be overreached at this period of his life (they called him Monsieur Goriot very respectfully then) that gave Mme. Vauquer the meanest opinion of his business abilities; she looked on him as an imbecile where money was concerned.

Goriot had brought with him a considerable wardrobe, the

siderable number of ounces; he could not bring himself to part with these gifts that reminded him of past domestic festivals.

"This was my wife's present to me on the first anniversary of our wedding day," he said to Mme. Vauquer, as he put away a little silver posset dish, with two turtle-doves billing on the cover. "Poor dear! she spent on it all the money she had saved before we married. Do you know, I would sooner scratch the earth with my nails for a living, madame, than part with that. But I shall be able to take my coffee out of it every morning for the rest of my days, thank the Lord! I am not to be pitied. There's not much fear of my starving for some time to come."

Finally, Mme. Vauquer's magpie's eye had discovered and read certain entries in the list of shareholders in the funds, and, after a rough calculation, was disposed to credit Goriot (worthy man) with something like ten thousand francs a year. From that day forward Mme. Vauquer (*née* De Conflans), who, as a matter of fact, had seen forty-eight summers, though she would only own to thirty-nine of them—Mme. Vauquer had her own ideas. Though Goriot's eyes seemed to have shrunk in their sockets, though they were weak and watery, owing to some glandular affection which compelled him to wipe them continually, she considered him to be a very gentlemanly and pleasant-looking man. Moreover, the widow saw favorable indications of character in the well-developed calves of his legs and in his square-shaped nose, indications still further borne out by the worthy man's full-moon countenance and look of stupid good-nature. This, in all probability, was a strongly-built animal, whose brains mostly consisted in a capacity for affection. His hair, worn in *ailes de pigeon*, and duly powdered every morning by the barber from the École Polytechnique, described five points on his low forehead, and made an elegant setting to his face. Though his manners were somewhat boorish, he was always as neat as a new pin and he took his snuff in a lordly way, like a man who knows that his snuff-box is always likely to

be filled with maccaboy; so that when Mme. Vauquer lay down to rest on the day of M. Goriot's installation, her heart, like a larded partridge, sweltered before the fire of a burning desire to shake off the shroud of Vauquer and rise again as Goriot. She would marry again, sell her boarding-house, give her hand to this fine flower of citizenship, become a lady of consequence in the quarter, and ask for subscriptions for charitable purposes; she would make little Sunday excursions to Choisy, Soisy, Gentilly; she would have a box at the theatre when she liked, instead of waiting for the author's tickets that one of her boarders sometimes gave her, in July; the whole Eldorado of a little Parisian household rose up before Mme. Vauquer in her dreams. Nobody knew that she herself possessed forty thousand francs, accumulated *sou* by *sou*, that was her secret; surely as far as money was concerned she was a very tolerable match. "And in other respects, I am quite his equal," she said to herself, turning as if to assure herself of the charms of a form that the portly Sylvie found moulded in down feathers every morning.

a *beautiful* garden, *extending* down to *an avenue of lin-*
ı at the further end." Mention was made of the bracing
of the place and its quiet situation.
; was this prospectus that attracted Mme. la Comtesse de
nbermesnil, a widow of six-and-thirty, who was awaiting
final settlement of her husband's affairs, and of another
ter regarding a pension due to her as the wife of a gen-
who had died "on the field of battle." On this Mme.
quer saw to her table, lighted a fire baily in the sitting-
n for nearly six months, and kept the promise of her
pectus, even going to some expense to do so. And the
ntess, on her side, addressed Mme. Vauquer as "my dear,"
promised her two more boarders, the Baronne de Vau-
land and the widow of a colonel, the late Comte de Pic-
isie, who were about to leave a boarding-house in the
ais, where the terms were higher than at the Maison
iquer. Both these ladies, moreover, would be very well
o when the people at the War Office had come to an end
heir formalities. "But Government departments are al-
s so dilatory," the lady added.
After dinner the two widows went together up to Mme.
iquer's room, and had a snug little chat over some cordial
various delicacies reserved for the mistress of the house.
e. Vauquer's ideas as to Goriot were cordially approved
Mme. de l'Ambermesnil; it was a capital notion, which
that matter she had guessed from the very first; in her
ion the vermicelli maker was an excellent man.
Ah! my dear lady, such a well-preserved man of his age,
ound as my eyesight—a man who might make a woman
py!" said the widow.
The good-natured Countess turned to the subject of Mme.
iquer's dress, which was not in harmony with her proj-
. "You must put yourself on a war footing," said she.
After much serious consideration the two widows went
pping together—they purchased a hat adorned with
ich feathers and a cap at the Palais Royal, and the
ntess took her friend to the Magasin de la Petite Jean-

and in their secret selves they are conscious that they are severely judged, and that they deserve to be judged severely; but still they feel an unconquerable craving for praises that they do not hear, or they are consumed by a desire to appear to possess, in the eyes of a new audience, the qualities which they have not, hoping to win the admiration or affection of strangers at the risk of forfeiting it again some day. Or, once more, there are other mercenary natures who never do a kindness to a friend or a relation simply because these have a claim upon them, while a service done to a stranger brings its reward to self-love. Such natures feel but little affection for those who are nearest to them; they keep their kindness for remoter circles of acquaintance, and show most to those who dwell on its utmost limits. Mme. Vauquer belonged to both these essentially mean, false, and execrable classes.

"If I had been here at the time," Vautrin would say at the end of the story, "I would have shown her up, and that misfortune would not have befallen you. I know that kind of phiz!"

Like all narrow natures, Mme. Vauquer was wont to confine her attention to events, and did not go very deeply into the causes that brought them about; she likewise preferred to throw the blame of her own mistakes on other people, so she chose to consider that the honest vermicelli maker was responsible for her misfortune. It had opened her eyes, so she said, with regard to him. As soon as she saw that her blandishments were in vain, and that her outlay on her toilette was money thrown away, she was not slow to discover the reason of his indifference. It became plain to her at once that there was *some other attraction*, to use her own expression. In short, it was evident that the hope she had so fondly cherished was a baseless delusion, and that she would "never make anything out of that man yonder," in the Countess' forcible phrase. The Countess seemed to have been a judge of character. Mme. Vauquer's aversion was naturally more energetic than her friendship, for her

hatred was not in proportion to her love, but to her disappointed expectations. The human heart may find here and there a resting-place short of the highest height of affection, but we seldom stop in the steep, downward slope of hatred. Still, M. Goriot was a lodger, and the widow's wounded self-love could not vent itself in an explosion of wrath; like a monk harassed by the prior of his convent, she was forced to stifle her sighs of disappointment, and to gulp down her craving for revenge. Little minds find gratification for their feelings, benevolent or otherwise, by a constant exercise of petty ingenuity. The widow employed her woman's malice to devise a system of covert persecution. She began by a course of retrenchment—various luxuries which had found their way to the table appeared there no more.

"No more gherkins, no more anchovies; they have made a fool of me!" she said to Sylvie one morning, and they returned to the old bill of fare.

The thrifty frugality necessary to those who mean to make

It was hardly to be expected that Mme. Vauquer should regard the increased regularity of her boarder's habits with complacency, when those little excursions of his had been so much to her interest. She attributed the change not so much to a gradual diminution of fortune as to a spiteful wish to annoy his hostess. It is one of the most detestable habits of a Liliputian mind to credit other people with its own malignant pettiness.

Unluckily, towards the end of the second year, M. Goriot's conduct gave some color to the idle talk about him. He asked Mme. Vauquer to give him a room on the second floor, and to make a corresponding reduction in her charges. Apparently, such strict economy was called for, that he did without a fire all through the winter. Mme. Vauquer asked to be paid in advance, an arrangement to which M. Goriot consented, and thenceforward she spoke of him as "Father Goriot."

What had brought about this decline and fall? Conjecture was keen, but investigation was difficult. Father Goriot was not communicative; in the sham countess' phrase, he was "a curmudgeon." Empty-headed people who babble about their own affairs because they have nothing else to occupy them, naturally conclude that if people say nothing of their doings it is because their doings will not bear being talked about; so the highly respectable merchant became a scoundrel, and the late beau was an old rogue. Opinion fluctuated. Sometimes, according to Vautrin, who came about this time to live in the Maison Vauquer, Father Goriot was a man who went on 'Change and *dabbled* (to use the sufficiently expressive language of the Stock Exchange) in stocks and shares after he had ruined himself by heavy speculation. Sometimes it was held that he was one of those petty gamblers who nightly play for small stakes until they win a few francs. A theory that he was a detective in the employ of the Home Office found favor at one time, but Vautrin urged that "Goriot was not sharp enough for one of that sort." There were yet other solutions; Father Goriot was a skinflint,

hatred was not in proportion [illegible] lived by selling lottery
pointed expectations. The [illegible] most mysterious brood of
there a resting-place short of [illegible] however vile his life might
but we seldom stop in the [illegible] he aroused in others was
Still, M. Goriot was a lodge[illegible]shed from their society—
love could not vent itself [illegible] had his uses, every one
monk harassed by the pri[illegible] wit on him; he was pelted
to stifle her sighs of disa[illegible] hard words. The general
craving for revenge. Lit[illegible] of a theory which seemed
feelings, benevolent or [illegible] Vauquer's view. According
petty ingenuity. The [illegible] at his time of life, as sound
to devise a system of [illegible] woman might be very happy,
course of retrenchmen[illegible] tastes. These are the facts
their way to the table [illegible] slanders were based.

"No more gherkin[illegible] few months after the departure
a fool of me!" she s[illegible] had managed to live for six
turned to the old bi[illegible]pense, Mme. Vauquer (not yet

The thrifty fruga[illegible] a silk dress and a young woman's

beloved of fair ladies, M. Goriot—the sun seeks
she said, alluding to his visitor. "*Peste!* you have
she was very pretty."
is my daughter," he said, with a kind of pride
, and the rest chose to consider this as the fatuity
man who wishes to save appearances.
h after this visit M. Goriot received another. The
ghter who had come to see him that morning came
ter dinner, this time in evening dress. The boarders,
discussion in the dining-room, caught a glimpse of a
fair-haired woman, slender, graceful, and much too
ruished-looking to be a daughter of Father Goriot's.
wo of them!" cried the portly Sylvie, who did not recog-
the lady of the first visit.
A few days later, and another young lady—a tall, well-
ulded brunette, with dark hair and bright eyes—came to
for M. Goriot.
"Three of them!" said Sylvie.

Then the second daughter, who had first come in the morn-
ng to see her father, came shortly afterwards in the evening. She wore a ball dress, and came in a carriage.

"Four of them!" commented Mme. Vauquer and her plump handmaid. Sylvie saw not a trace of resemblance between this great lady and the girl in her simple morning dress who had entered her kitchen on the occasion of her first visit.

At that time Goriot was paying twelve hundred francs a year to his landlady, and Mme. Vauquer saw nothing out of the common in the fact that a rich man had four or five mistresses; nay, she thought it very knowing of him to pass them off as his daughters. She was not at all inclined to draw a hard-and-fast line, or to take umbrage at his sending for them to the Maison Vauquer; yet, inasmuch as these visits explained her boarder's indifference to her, she went so far (at the end of the second year) as to speak of him as an "ugly old wretch." When at length her boarder declined to nine hundred francs a year, she asked him very insolently what he took her house to be, after meeting one of these

ladies on the stairs. Father Goriot answered that the lady was his eldest daughter.

"So you have two or three dozen daughters, have you?" said Mme. Vauquer sharply.

"I have only two," her boarder answered meekly, like a ruined man who is broken in to all the cruel usage of misfortune.

Towards the end of the third year Father Goriot reduced his expenses still further; he went up to the third story, and now paid forty-five francs a month. He did without snuff, told his hairdresser that he no longer required his services, and gave up wearing powder. When Goriot appeared for the first time in this condition, an exclamation of astonishment broke from his hostess at the color of his hair—a dingy olive gray. He had grown sadder day by day under the influence of some hidden trouble; among all the faces round the table, his was the most woe-begone. There was no longer any doubt. Goriot was an elderly libertine, whose eyes had only

longer like his former self. The hale vermicelli manufacturer, sixty-two years of age, who had looked scarce forty, the stout, comfortable, prosperous tradesman, with an almost bucolic air, and such a brisk demeanor that it did you good to look at him; the man with something boyish in his smile, had suddenly sunk into his dotage, and had become a feeble, vacillating septuagenarian.

The keen, bright blue eyes had grown dull, and faded to a steel-gray color; the red inflamed rims looked as though they had shed tears of blood. He excited feelings of repulsion in some, and of pity in others. The young medical students who came to the house noticed the drooping of his lower lip and the conformation of the facial angle; and, after teasing him for some time to no purpose, they declared that cretinism was setting in.

One evening after dinner Mme. Vauquer said half banteringly to him, "So those daughters of yours don't come to see you any more, eh?" meaning to imply her doubts as to his paternity; but Father Goriot shrank as if his hostess had touched him with a sword-point.

"They come sometimes," he said in a tremulous voice.

"Aha! you still see them sometimes?" cried the students. "Bravo, Father Goriot!"

The old man scarcely seemed to hear the witticisms at his expense that followed on the words; he had relapsed into the dreamy state of mind that these superficial observers took for senile torpor, due to his lack of intelligence. If they had only known, they might have been deeply interested by the problem of his condition; but few problems were more obscure. It was easy, of course, to find out whether Goriot had really been a vermicelli manufacturer; the amount of his fortune was readily discoverable; but the old people, who were most inquisitive as to his concerns, never went beyond the limits of the Quarter, and lived in the lodging-house much as oysters cling to a rock. As for the rest, the current of life in Paris daily awaited them, and swept them away with it; so soon as they left the Rue Neuve-Sainte-Gene-

aminations in law had left him free to see the sights of Paris and to enjoy some of its amusements. A student has not much time on his hands if he sets himself to learn the repertory of every theatre, and to study the ins and outs of the labyrinth of Paris. To know its customs; to learn the language, and become familiar with the amusements of the capital, he must explore its recesses, good and bad, follow the studies that please him best, and form some idea of the treasures contained in galleries and museums.

At this stage of his career a student grows eager and excited about all sorts of follies that seem to him to be of immense importance. He has his hero, his great man, a professor at the Collège de France, paid to talk down to the level of his audience. He adjusts his cravat, and strikes various attitudes for the benefit of the women in the first galleries at the Opéra-Comique. As he passes through all these successive initiations, and breaks out of his sheath, the horizons of life widen around him, and at length he grasps the plan of society with the different human strata of which it is composed.

If he begins by admiring the procession of carriages on sunny afternoons in the Champs-Élysées, he soon reaches the further stage of envying their owners. Unconsciously, Eugène had served his apprenticeship before he went back to Angoulême for the long vacation after taking his degrees as bachelor of arts and bachelor of law. The illusions of childhood had vanished, so also had the ideas he brought with him from the provinces; he had returned thither with an intelligence developed, with loftier ambitions, and saw things as they were at home in the old manor house. His father and mother, his two brothers and two sisters, with an aged aunt, whose whole fortune consisted in annuities, lived on the little estate of Rastignac. The whole property brought in about three thousand francs; and though the amount varied with the season (as must always be the case in a vine-growing district), they were obliged to spare an unvarying twelve hundred francs out of their income for him. He saw

[illegible] constantly the poverty, which they had generously hidden from him, weighed upon them; he could not help comparing the sisters, who had seemed so beautiful to his boyish eyes, with women in Paris, who had realized the beauty of his dreams. The uncertain future of the whole family depended upon him. It did not escape his eyes that not a crumb was wasted in the house, nor that the wine they drank was made from the second pressing; a multitude of small things, which it is useless to speak of in detail here, made him burn to distinguish himself, and his ambition to succeed increased tenfold.

He meant, like all great souls, that his success should be owing entirely to his merits; but his was pre-eminently a sanguine temperament, the execution of his plans was sure to be marred by the vertigo that seizes on youth when youth finds itself alone in a wide sea, uncertain how to spend its energies, whither to steer its course, how to adapt its sails to the winds. At first he determined to fling himself heart and

good. After much shaking of the branches of the family tree, the old lady came to the conclusion that of all persons who could be useful to her nephew among the selfish genus of rich relations, the Vicomtesse de Beauséant was the least likely to refuse. To this lady, therefore, she wrote in the old-fashioned style, recommending Eugène to her; pointing out to her nephew that if he succeeded in pleasing Mme. de Beauséant, the Vicomtesse would introduce him to other relations. A few days after his return to Paris, therefore, Rastignac sent his aunt's letter to Mme. de Beauséant. The Vicomtesse replied by an invitation to a ball for the following evening. This was the position of affairs at the Maison Vauquer at the end of November 1819.

A few days later, after Mme. de Beauséant's ball, Eugène came in at two o'clock in the morning. The persevering student meant to make up for the lost time by working until daylight. It was the first time that he had attempted to spend the night in this way in that silent quarter. The spell of a factitious energy was upon him; he had beheld the pomp and splendor of the world. He had not dined at the Maison Vauquer; the boarders probably would think that he would walk home at daybreak from the dance, as he had done sometimes on former occasions, after a fête at the Prado, or a ball at the Odéon, splashing his silk stockings thereby, and ruining his pumps.

It so happened that Christophe took a look into the street before drawing the bolts of the door; and Rastignac, coming in at that moment, could go up to his room without making any noise, followed by Christophe, who made a great deal. Eugène exchanged his dress suit for a shabby overcoat and slippers, kindled a fire with some blocks of patent fuel, and prepared for his night's work in such a sort that the faint sounds he made were drowned by Christophe's heavy tramp on the stairs.

Eugène sat absorbed in thought for a few moments before plunging into his law books. He had just become aware of the fact that the Vicomtesse de Beauséant was one of the

queens of fashion, that her house was thought to be the pleasantest in the Faubourg Saint-Germain. And not only so, she was, by right of her fortune, and the name she bore, one of the most conspicuous figures in that aristocratic world. Thanks to the aunt, thanks to Mme. de Marcillac's letter of introduction, the poor student had been kindly received in that house before he knew the extent of the favor thus shown to him. It was almost like a patent of nobility to be admitted to those gilded salons; he had appeared in the most exclusive circle in Paris, and now all doors were open for him. Eugène had been dazzled at first by the brilliant assembly, and had scarcely exchanged a few words with the Vicomtesse; he had been content to single out a goddess among this throng of Parisian divinities, one of those women who are sure to attract a young man's fancy.

The Comtesse Anastasie de Restaud was tall and gracefully made; she had one of the prettiest figures in Paris. Imagine a pair of great dark eyes, a magnificently moulded hand, a shapely foot. There was a fiery energy in her move-

he did all he could to cultivate an acquaintance with this lovely countess, making the best of his opportunities in the quadrille and during a waltz that she gave him. When he had told her that he was a cousin of Mme. de Beauséant's, the Countess, whom he took for a great lady, asked him to call at her house, and after her parting smile, Rastignac felt convinced that he must make this visit. He was so lucky as to light upon some one who did not laugh at his ignorance, a fatal defect among the gilded and insolent youth of that period; the coterie of Maulincourts, Maximes de Trailles, de Marsays, Ronquerolles, Ajuda-Pintos, and Vandenesses who shone there in all the glory of coxcombry among the best-dressed women of fashion in Paris—Lady Brandon, the Duchesse de Langeais, the Comtesse de Kergarouët, Mme. de Sérizy, the Duchesse de Carigliano, the Comtesse Ferraud, Mme. de Lanty, the Marquise d'Aiglemont, Mme. Firmiani, the Marquise de Listomère and the Marquise d'Espard, the Duchesse de Maufrigneuse and the Grandlieus. Luckily, therefore, for him, the novice happened upon the Marquis de Montriveau, the lover of the Duchesse de Langeais, a general as simple as a child; from him Rastignac learned that the Comtesse lived in the Rue du Helder.

Ah, what it is to be young, eager to see the world, greedily on the watch for any chance that brings you nearer the woman of your dreams, and behold two houses open their doors to you! To set foot in the Vicomtesse de Beauséant's house in the Faubourg Saint-Germain; to fall on your knees before à Comtesse de Restaud in the Chaussée d'Antin; to look at one glance across a vista of Paris drawing-rooms, conscious that, possessing sufficient good looks, you may hope to find aid and protection there in a feminine heart! To feel ambitious enough to spurn the tight-rope on which you must walk with the steady head of an acrobat for whom a fall is impossible, and to find in a charming woman the best of all balancing poles.

He sat there with his thoughts for a while, Law on the one hand, and Poverty on the other, beholding a radiant vision

of a woman rise above the dull, smouldering fire. Who would not have paused and questioned the future as Eugène was doing? who would not have pictured it full of success? His wandering thoughts took wings; he was transported out of the present into that blissful future; he was sitting by Mme. de Restaud's side, when a sort of sigh, like the grunt of an overburdened St. Joseph, broke the silence of the night. It vibrated through the student, who took the sound for a death-groan. He opened his door noiselessly, went out upon the landing, and saw a thin streak of light under Father Goriot's door. Eugène feared that his neighbor had been taken ill; he went over and looked through the keyhole; the old man was busily engaged in an occupation so singular and so suspicious that Rastignac thought he was only doing a piece of necessary service to society to watch the self-styled vermicelli maker's nocturnal industries.

The table was upturned, and Goriot had doubtless in some way secured a silver plate and cup to the bar before knotting a thick rope round them; he was pulling at this rope with

Father Goriot looked sadly at his handiwork, tears fell from his eyes, he blew out the dip which had served him for a light while he manipulated the silver, and Eugène heard him sigh as he lay down again.

"He is mad," thought the student.

"*Poor child!*" Father Goriot said aloud. Rastignac, hearing those words, concluded to keep silence; he would not hastily condemn his neighbor. He was just in the doorway of his room when a strange sound from the staircase below reached his ears; it might have been made by two men coming up in list slippers. Eugène listened; two men there certainly were, he could hear their breathing. Yet there had been no sound of opening the street door, no footsteps in the passage. Suddenly, too, he saw a faint gleam of light on the second story; it came from M. Vautrin's room.

"There are a good many mysteries here for a lodging-house!" he said to himself.

He went part of the way downstairs and listened again. The rattle of gold reached his ears. In another moment the light was put out, and again he distinctly heard the breathing of two men, but no sound of a door being opened or shut. The two men went downstairs, the faint sounds growing fainter as they went.

"Who is there?" cried Mme. Vauquer out of her bedroom window.

"I, Mme. Vauquer," answered Vautrin's deep bass voice. "I am coming in."

"That is odd! Christophe drew the bolts," said Eugène, going back to his room. "You have to sit up at night, it seems, if you really mean to know all that is going on about you in Paris."

These incidents turned his thought from his ambitious dreams; he betook himself to his work, but his thought wandered back to Father Goriot's suspicious occupation; Mme. de Restaud's face swam again and again before his eyes like a vision of a brilliant future, and at last he lay down and slept with clenched fists. When a young man makes up his

mind that he will work all night, the chances are that seven times out of ten he will sleep till morning. Such vigils do not begin before we are turned twenty.

The next morning Paris was wrapped in one of the dense fogs that throw the most punctual people out in their calculations as to the time; even the most business-like folk fail to keep their appointments in such weather, and ordinary mortals wake up at noon and fancy it is eight o'clock. On this morning it was half-past nine, and Mme. Vauquer still lay abed. Christophe was late, Sylvie was late, but the two sat comfortably taking their coffee as usual. It was Sylvie's custom to take the cream off the milk destined for the boarders' breakfast for her own, and to boil the remainder for some time, so that madame should not discover this illegal exaction.

"Sylvie," said Christophe, as he dipped a piece of toast into the coffee, "M. Vautrin, who is not such a bad sort, all the same, had two people come to see him again last night. If madame says anything, mind you say nothing about it."

"Has he given you something?"

"Yes. I met a gentleman in the street a few days ago; he said to me, 'There's a gentleman in your place, isn't there? a tall man that dyes his whiskers?' I told him, 'No, sir; they aren't dyed. A gay fellow like him hasn't the time to do it.' And when I told M. Vautrin about it afterwards, he said, 'Quite right, my boy. That is the way to answer them. There is nothing more unpleasant than to have your little weaknesses known; it might spoil many a match.'"

"Well, and for my part," said Sylvie, "a man tried to humbug me at the market wanting to know if I had seen him put on his shirt. Such bosh! There," she cried, interrupting herself, "that's a quarter to ten striking at the Val-de-Grâce, and not a soul stirring!"

"Pooh! they are all gone out. Mme. Couture and the girl went out at eight o'clock to take the wafer at Saint-Étienne. Father Goriot started off somewhere with a parcel, and the student won't be back from his lecture till ten o'clock. I saw them go while I was sweeping the stairs; Father Goriot knocked up against me, and his parcel was as hard as iron. What is the old fellow up to, I wonder? He is as good as a plaything for the rest of them; they can never let him alone; but he is a good man, all the same, and worth more than all of them put together. He doesn't give you much himself, but he sometimes sends you with a message to ladies who fork out famous tips; they are dressed grandly, too."

"His daughters, as he calls them, eh? There are a dozen of them."

"I have never been to more than two—the two who came here."

"There is madame moving overhead; I shall have to go, or she will raise a fine racket. Just keep an eye on the milk, Christophe; don't let the cat get at it."

Sylvie went up to her mistress' room.

"Sylvie! How is this? It's nearly ten o'clock, and you let me sleep on like a dormouse! Such a thing has never happened before."

"It's the fog; it is that thick, you could cut it with a knife."

"But how about breakfast?"

"Bah! the boarders are possessed, I'm sure. They all cleared out before there was a wink of daylight."

"Do speak properly, Sylvie," Mme. Vauquer retorted; "say a blink of daylight."

"Ah, well, madame, whichever you please. Anyhow, you can have breakfast at ten o'clock. La Michonnette and Poiret have neither of them stirred. There are only those two upstairs, and they are sleeping like the logs they are."

"But, Sylvie, you put their names together as if——"

"As if what?" said Sylvie, bursting into a guffaw. "The two of them make a pair."

"It is a strange thing, isn't it, Sylvie, how M. Vautrin got in last night after Christophe had bolted the door?"

"Not at all, madame. Christophe heard M. Vautrin, and went down and undid the door. And here are you imagining that——"

"Give me my bodice, and be quick and get breakfast ready. Dish up the rest of the mutton with the potatoes, and you

"Who knows? He is up to all sorts of tricks."

"I have overslept myself," said Mme. Vauquer.

"But madame looks as fresh as a rose, all the same."

The door bell rang at that moment, and Vautrin came through the sitting-room, singing loudly:

"'Tis the same old story everywhere,
A roving heart and a roving glance . .

"Oh! Mamma Vauquer! good-morning!" he cried at the sight of his hostess, and he put his arm gaily round her waist.

"There! have done——"

"'Impertinence!' Say it!" he answered. "Come, say it! Now, isn't that what you really mean? Stop a bit, I will help you to set the table. Ah! I am a nice man, am I not?

"For the locks of brown and the golden hair
A sighing lover . . .

"Oh! I have just seen something so funny——

. . . . led by chance."

"What?" asked the widow.

"Father Goriot in the goldsmith's shop in the Rue Dauphine at half-past eight this morning. They buy old spoons and forks and gold lace there, and Goriot sold a piece of silver plate for a good round sum. It had been twisted out of shape very neatly for a man that's not used to the trade."

"Really? You don't say so?"

"Yes. One of my friends is expatriating himself; I had been to see him off on board the Royal Mail steamer, and was coming back here. I waited after that to see what Father Goriot would do; it is a comical affair. He came back to this quarter of the world, to the Rue des Grès, and went into a money-lender's house; everybody knows him, Gobseck, a stuck-up rascal, that would make dominoes out of his father's bones; a Turk, a heathen, an old Jew, a Greek; it would be

"We have just been to say our prayers at Saint-Étienne lu Mont. To-day is the day when we must go to see M. Taillefer. Poor little thing! She is trembling like a leaf," Mme. Couture went on, as she seated herself before the fire and held the steaming soles of her boots to the blaze.

"Warm yourself, Victorine," said Mme. Vauquer.

"It is quite right and proper, mademoiselle, to pray to Heaven to soften your father's heart," said Vautrin, as he drew a chair nearer to the orphan girl; "but that is not enough. What you want is a friend who will give the monster a piece of his mind; a barbarian that has three millions (so they say), and will not give you a dowry; and a pretty girl needs a dowry nowadays."

"Poor child!" said Mme. Vauquer. "Never mind, my pet, your wretch of a father is going just the way to bring trouble upon himself."

Victorine's eyes filled with tears at the words, and the widow checked herself at a sign from Mme. Couture.

"If we could only see him!" said the Commissary-General's widow; "if I could speak to him myself and give him his wife's last letter! I have never dared to run the risk of sending it by post: he knew my handwriting——"

"'Oh woman, persecuted and injured innocent!'" exclaimed Vautrin, breaking in upon her. "So that is how you are, is it? In a few days' time I will look into your affairs, and it will be all right, you shall see."

"Oh! sir," said Victorine, with a tearful but eager glance at Vautrin, who showed no sign of being touched by it, "if you know of any way of communicating with my father, please be sure and tell him that his affection and my mother's honor are more to me than all the money in the world. If you can induce him to relent a little towards me, I will pray to God for you. You may be sure of my gratitude——"

"*The same old story everywhere,*" sang Vautrin, with a satirical intonation. At this juncture, Goriot, Mlle. Michonneau, and Poiret came downstairs together; possibly the scent of the gravy which Sylvie was making to serve with the mut-

"That she was coming here," said Vautrin, with a keen look at the student. "I expect that she was going to call on old Gobseck, a money-lender. If ever you explore a Parisian woman's heart, you will find the money-lender first, and the lover afterwards. Your countess is called Anastasie de Restaud, and she lives in the Rue du Helder."

The student stared hard at Vautrin. Father Goriot raised his head at the words, and gave the two speakers a glance so full of intelligence and uneasiness that the lodgers beheld him with astonishment.

"Then Christophe was too late, and she must have gone to him!" cried Goriot, with anguish in his voice.

"It is just as I guessed," said Vautrin, leaning over to whisper in Mme. Vauquer's ear.

Goriot went on with his breakfast, but seemed unconscious of what he was doing. He had never looked more stupid nor more taken up with his own thoughts than he did at that moment.

"Who the devil could have told you her name, M. Vautrin?" asked Eugène.

"Aha! there you are!" answered Vautrin. "Old Father Goriot there knew it quite well! and why should not I know it too?"

"M. Goriot?" the student cried.

"What is it?" said the old man. "So she was very beautiful, was she, yesterday night?"

"Who?"

"Mme. de Restaud."

"Look at the old wretch," said Mme. Vauquer, speaking to Vautrin; "how his eyes light up!"

"Then does he really keep her?" said Mlle. Michonneau, in a whisper to the student.

"Oh! yes, she was tremendously pretty," Eugène answered. Father Goriot watched him with eager eyes. "If Mme. de Beauséant had not been there, my divine countess would have been the queen of the ball; none of the younger men had eyes for any one else. I was the twelfth on her list, and she

danced every quadrille. The other women were furious. She must have enjoyed herself, if ever creature did! It is a true saying that there is no more beautiful sight than a frigate in full sail, a galloping horse, or a woman dancing."

"So the wheel turns," said Vautrin; "yesterday night at a duchess' ball, this morning in a money-lender's office, on the lowest rung of the ladder—just like a Parisienne! If their husbands cannot afford to pay for their frantic extravagance, they will sell themselves. Or if they cannot do that, they will tear out their mothers' hearts to find something to pay for their splendor. They will turn the world upside down. Just a Parisienne through and through!"

Father Goriot's face, which had shone at the student's words like the sun on a bright day, clouded over all at once at this cruel speech of Vautrin's.

"Well," said Mme. Vauquer, "but where is your adventure? Did you speak to her? Did you ask her if she wanted to study law?"

"She did not see me," said Eugène. "But only think of

set on convincing you. You are too young to know Paris thoroughly yet; later on you will find out that there are what we call men with a passion——"

Mlle. Michonneau gave Vautrin a quick glance at these words. They seemed to be like the sound of a trumpet to a trooper's horse. "Aha!" said Vautrin, stopping in his speech to give her a searching glance, "so we have had our little experiences, have we?"

The old maid lowered her eyes like a nun who sees a statue.

"Well," he went on, "when folk of that kind get a notion into their heads, they cannot drop it. They must drink the water from some particular spring—it is stagnant as often as not; but they will sell their wives and families, they will sell their own souls to the devil to get it. For some this spring is play, or the stock-exchange, or music, or a collection of pictures or insects; for others it is some woman who can give them the dainties they like. You might offer these last all the women on earth—they would turn up their noses; they will have the only one who can gratify their passion. It often happens that the woman does not care for them at all, and treats them cruelly; they buy their morsels of satisfaction very dear; but no matter, the fools are never tired of it; they will take their last blanket to the pawnbroker's to give their last five-franc piece to her. Father Goriot here is one of that sort. He is discreet, so the Countess exploits him—just the way of the gay world. The poor old fellow thinks of her and of nothing else. In all other respects you see he is a stupid animal; but get him on that subject, and his eyes sparkle like diamonds. That secret is not difficult to guess. He took some plate himself this morning to the melting-pot, and I saw him at Daddy Gobseck's in the Rue des Grès. And now, mark what follows—he came back here, and gave a letter for the Comtesse de Restaud to that noodle of a Christophe, who showed us the address; there was a receipted bill inside it. It is clear that it was an urgent matter if the Countess also went herself to the old money lender. Father Goriot has

financed her handsomely. There is no need to tack a tale together; the thing is self-evident. So that shows you, sir student, that all the time your Countess was smiling, dancing, flirting, swaying her peach-flower crowned head, with her gown gathered into her hand, her slippers were pinching her, as they say; she was thinking of her protested bills, or her lover's protested bills."

"You have made me wild to know the truth," cried Eugène; "I will go to call on Mme. de Restaud to-morrow."

"Yes," echoed Poiret; "you must go and call on Mme. de Restaud."

"And perhaps you will find Father Goriot there, who will take payment for the assistance he politely rendered."

Engène looked disgusted. "Why, then, this Paris of yours is a slough."

"And an uncommonly queer slough, too," replied Vautrin. "The mud splashes you as you drive through in your carriage—you are a respectable person; you go afoot and are

a few moments later Mme. Couture and Victorine drove away in a cab which Sylvie had called for them. Poiret gave his arm to Mlle. Michonneau, and they went together to spend the two sunniest hours of the day in the Jardin des Plantes.

"Well, those two are as good as married," was the portly Sylvie's comment. "They are going out together to-day for the first time. They are such a couple of dry sticks that if they happen to strike against each other they will draw sparks like flint and steel."

"Keep clear of Mlle. Michonneau's shawl, then," said Mme. Vauquer, laughing; "it would flare up like tinder."

At four o'clock that evening, when Goriot came in, he saw, by the light of two smoky lamps, that Victorine's eyes were red. Mme. Vauquer was listening to the history of the visit made that morning to M. Taillefer; it had been made in vain. Taillefer was tired of the annual application made by his daughter and her elderly friend; he gave them a personal interview in order to arrive at an understanding with them.

"My dear lady," said Mme. Couture, addressing Mme. Vauquer, "just imagine it; he did not even ask Victorine to sit down, she was standing the whole time. He said to me quite coolly, without putting himself in a passion, that we might spare ourselves the trouble of going there; that the young lady (he would not call her his daughter) was injuring her cause by importuning him (*importuning!* once a year, the wretch!); that as Victorine's mother had nothing when he married her, Victorine ought not to expect anything from him; in fact, he said the most cruel things, that made the poor child burst out crying. The little thing threw herself at her father's feet and spoke up bravely; she said that she only persevered in her visits for her mother's sake; that she would obey him without a murmur, but that she begged him to read her poor dead mother's farewell letter. She took it up and gave it to him, saying the most beautiful things in the world, most beautifully expressed; I do not know where she learned them; God must have put them into her head,

for the poor child was inspired to speak so nicely that it made me cry like a fool to hear her talk. And what do you think the monster was doing all the time? Cutting his nails! He took the letter that poor Mme. Taillefer had soaked with tears, and flung it on to the chimney-piece. 'That is all right,' he said. He held out his hands to raise his daughter, but she covered them with kisses, and he drew them away again. Scandalous, isn't it? And his great booby of a son came in and took no notice of his sister."

"What inhuman wretches they must be!" said Father Goriot.

"And then they both went out of the room," Mme. Couture went on, without heeding the worthy vermicelli maker's exclamation; "father and son bowed to me, and asked me to excuse them on account of urgent business! That is the history of our call. Well, he has seen his daughter at any rate. How he can refuse to acknowledge her I cannot think, for they are as like as two peas."

"Is dinner ready?" cried Horace Bianchon, a medical student, and a friend of Rastignac's; "my stomach is sinking *usque ad talones.*"

"There is an uncommon *frozerama* outside," said Vautrin. "Make room there, Father Goriot! Confound it, your foot covers the whole front of the stove."

"Illustrious M. Vautrin," put in Bianchon, "why do you say *frozerama?* It is incorrect; it should be *frozenrama.*"

"No, it shouldn't," said the official from the Muséum; "*frozerama* is right by the same rule that you say 'My feet are *froze.*'"

"Ah! ah!"

"Here is his Excellency the Marquis de Rastignac, Doctor of the Law of Contraries," cried Bianchon, seizing Eugène by the throat, and almost throttling him.

"Hallo there! hallo!"

Mlle. Michonneau came noiselessly in, bowed to the rest of the party, and took her place beside the three women without saying a word.

"That old bat always makes me shudder," said Bianchon in a low voice, indicating Mlle. Michonneau to Vautrin. "I have studied Gall's system, and I am sure she has the bump of Judas."

"Then you have seen a case before?" said Vautrin.

"Who has not?" answered Bianchon. "Upon my word, that ghastly old maid looks just like one of the long worms that will gnaw a beam through, give them time enough."

"That is the way, young man," returned he of the forty years and the dyed whiskers:

> "The rose has lived the life of a rose—
> A morning's space."

"Aha! here is a magnificent *soupe-au-rama,*" cried Poiret as Christophe came in bearing the soup with cautious heed.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Mme. Vauquer; "it is *soupe aux choux.*"

All the young men roared with laughter.

"Had you there, Poiret!"

"Poir-r-r-rette! she had you there!"

"Score two points to Mamma Vauquer," said Vautrin.

"Did any one notice the fog this morning?" asked the official.

"It was a frantic fog," said Bianchon, "a fog unparalleled, doleful, melancholy, sea-green, asthmatical—a Goriot of a fog!"

"A Goriorama," said the art student, "because you couldn't see a thing in it."

"Hey! Milord Gâôriotte, they air talking about yoo-o-ou!"

Father Goriot, seated at the lower end of the table, close to the door through which the servant entered, raised his face; he had smelt at a scrap of bread that lay under his table napkin, an old trick acquired in his commercial capacity, that still showed itself at times.

"Well," Madame Vauquer cried in sharp tones, that rang above the rattle of spoons and plates and the sound of other

"Corn-et."
"Corn-elian."
"Corn-ice."
"Corn-ucopia."
"Corn-crake."
"Corn-cockle."
"Corn-orama."

The eight responses came like a rolling fire from every part of the room, and the laughter that followed was the more uproarious because poor Father Goriot stared at the others with a puzzled look, like a foreigner trying to catch the meaning of words in a language which he does not understand.

"Corn? . . ." he said, turning to Vautrin, his next neighbor.

"Corn on your foot, old man!" said Vautrin, and he drove Father Goriot's cap down over his eyes by a blow on the crown.

The poor old man thus suddenly attacked was for a moment too bewildered to do anything. Christophe carried off his plate, thinking that he had finished his soup, so that when Goriot had pushed back his cap from his eyes his spoon encountered the table. Every one burst out laughing. "You are a disagreeable joker, sir," said the old man, "and if you take any further liberties with me——"

"Well, what then, old boy?" Vautrin interrupted.

"Well, then, you shall pay dearly for it some day——"

"Down below, eh?" said the artist, "in the little dark corner where they put naughty boys."

"Well, mademoiselle," Vautrin said, turning to Victorine, "you are eating nothing. So papa was refractory, was he?"

"A monster!" said Mme. Couture.

"Mademoiselle might make application for aliment pending her suit; she is not eating anything. Eh! eh! just see how Father Goriot is staring at Mlle. Victorine."

The old man had forgotten his dinner, he was so absorbed in gazing at the poor girl; the sorrow in her face was unmis-

takable,—the slighted love of a child whose father would not recognize her.

"We are mistaken about Father Goriot, my dear boy," said Eugène in a low voice. "He is not an idiot, nor wanting in energy. Try your Gall system on him, and let me know what you think. I saw him crush a silver dish last night as if it had been made of wax; there seems to be something extraordinary going on in his mind just now, to judge by his face. His life is so mysterious that it must be worth studying. Oh! you may laugh, Bianchon; I am not joking."

"The man is a subject, is he?" said Bianchon; "all right! I will dissect him, if he will give me a chance."

"No; feel his bumps."

"Hm!—his stupidity might perhaps be contagious."

The next day Rastignac dressed himself very elegantly, and about three o'clock in the afternoon went to call on Mme. de Restaud. On the way thither he indulged in the wild intoxi-

"If I were rich," he said, as he changed the five-franc piece he had brought with him in case anything might happen, "I would take a cab, then I could think at my ease."

At last he reached the Rue du Helder, and asked for the Comtesse de Restaud. He bore the contemptuous glances of the servants, who had seen him cross the court on foot, with the cold fury of a man who knows that he will succeed some day. He understood the meaning of their glances at once, for he had felt his inferiority as soon as he entered the court, where a smart cab was waiting. All the delights of life in Paris seemed to be implied by this visible and manifest sign of luxury and extravagance. A fine horse, in magnificent harness, was pawing the ground, and all at once the law student felt out of humor with himself. Every compartment in his brain which he had thought to find so full of wit was bolted fast; he grew positively stupid. He sent up his name to the Countess, and waited in the ante-chamber, standing on one foot before a window that looked out upon the court; mechanically he leaned his elbow against the sash, and stared before him. The time seemed long; he would have left the house but for the southern tenacity of purpose which works miracles when it is single-minded.

"Madame is in her boudoir, and cannot see any one at present, sir," said the servant. "She gave me no answer; but if you will go into the dining-room, there is some one already there."

Rastignac was impressed with a sense of the formidable power of the lackey who can accuse or condemn his masters by a word; he coolly opened the door by which the man had just entered the ante-chamber, meaning, no doubt, to show these insolent flunkeys that he was familiar with the house; but he found that he had thoughtlessly precipitated himself into a small room full of dressers, where lamps were standing, and hot-water pipes, on which towels were being dried; a dark passage and a back staircase lay beyond it. Stifled laughter from the ante-chamber added to his confusion.

"This way to the drawing-room, sir," said the servant, with

the exaggerated respect which seemed to be one more jest at his expense.

Eugène turned so quickly that he stumbled against a bath. By good luck, he managed to keep his hat on his head, and saved it from immersion in the water; but just as he turned, a door opened at the further end of the dark passage, dimly lighted by a small lamp. Rastignac heard voices and the sound of a kiss; one of the speakers was Mme. de Restaud, the other was Father Goriot. Eugène followed the servant through the dining-room into the drawing-room; he went to a window that looked out into the courtyard, and stood there for a while. He meant to know whether this Goriot was really the Goriot that he knew. His heart beat unwontedly fast; he remembered Vautrin's hideous insinuations. A well-dressed young man suddenly emerged from the room almost as Eugène entered it, saying impatiently to the servant who stood at the door: "I am going, Maurice. Tell Madame la Comtesse that I waited more than half an hour for her."

Whereupon this insolent being, who doubtless had a right

r so long as they require his services, or the sort of
ˢt they feel it necessary to show for some one whose repu-
ı has been blown upon, so that they blush to acknowledge
ɛquaintance. Father Goriot gave him a little friendly
and a good-natured smile. All this happened with
ıing speed. Eugène was so deeply interested that he
t that he was not alone till he suddenly heard the
tess' voice.

h! Maxime, were you going away?" she said reproach-
with a shade of pique in her manner. The Countess
ɔot seen the incident nor the entrance of the tilbury.
gnac turned abruptly and saw her standing before him,
ttishly dressed in a loose white cashmere gown with
of rose-colored ribbon here and there; her hair was
ɛsly coiled about her head, as is the wont of Parisian
n in the morning; there was a soft fragrance about her
ubtless she was fresh from a bath;—her graceful form
ɛd more flexible, her beauty more luxuriant. Her eyes
ned. A young man can see everything at a glance; he
the radiant influence of woman as a plant discerns and
bs its nutriment from the air; he did not need to touch
ands to feel their cool freshness. He saw faint rose tints
ıgh the cashmere of the dressing gown; it had fallen
tly open, giving glimpses of a bare throat, on which the
nt's eyes rested. The Countess had no need of the ad-
tious aid of corsets; her girdle defined the outlines of
lender waist; her throat was a challenge to love; her
thrust into slippers, were daintily small. As Maxime
her hand and kissed it, Eugène became aware of Max-
existence, and the Countess saw Eugène.

h! is that you, M. de Rastignac? I am very glad to
ou," she said, but there was something in her manner
a shrewd observer would have taken as a hint to depart.
axime, as the Countess Anastasie had called the young
with the haughty insolence of bearing, looked from
ne to the lady, and from the lady to Eugène; it was
iently evident that he wished to be rid of the latter. An

lently and so sulkily, that Anastasie's fair face suddenly clouded over. She turned to Eugène, with a cool, questioning glance that asked plainly, "Why do you not go?" a glance which well-bred people regard as a cue to make their exit.

Eugène assumed an amiable expression.

"Madame," he began, "I hastened to call upon you——"

He stopped short. The door opened, and the owner of the tilbury suddenly appeared. He had left his hat outside, and did not greet the Countess; he looked meditatively at Rastignac, and held out his hand to Maxime with a cordial "Good morning," that astonished Eugène not a little. The young provincial did not understand the amenities of a triple alliance.

"M. de Restaud," said the Countess, introducing her husband to the law student.

Eugène bowed profoundly.

"This gentleman," she continued, presenting Eugène to her husband, "is M. de Rastignac; he is related to Mme. la Vicomtesse de Beauséant through the Marcillacs; I had the pleasure of meeting him at her last ball."

Related to Mme. la Vicomtesse de Beauséant through the Marcillacs! These words, on which the countess threw ever so slight an emphasis, by reason of the pride that the mistress of a house takes in showing that she only receives people of distinction as visitors in her house, produced a magical effect. The Count's stiff manner relaxed at once as he returned the student's bow.

"Delighted to have an opportunity of making your acquaintance," he said.

Maxime de Trailles himself gave Eugène an uneasy glance, and suddenly dropped his insolent manner. The mighty name had all the power of a fairy's wand; those closed compartments in the southern brain flew open again; Rastignac's carefully drilled faculties returned. It was as if a sudden light had pierced the obscurity of this upper world of Paris, and he began to see, though everything was indistinct as yet. Mme. Vauquer's lodging-house and Father Goriot were very far remote from his thoughts.

"I thought that the Marcillacs were extinct," the Comte de Restaud said, addressing Eugène.

"Yes, they are extinct," answered the law student. "My great-uncle, the Chevalier de Rastignac, married the heiress of the Marcillac family. They had only one daughter, who married the Maréchal de Clarimbault, Mme. de Beauséant's grandfather on the mother's side. We are the younger branch of the family, and the younger branch is all the poorer because my great-uncle, the Vice-Admiral, lost all that he had in the King's service. The Government during the Revolution refused to admit our claims when the Compagnie des Indes was liquidated."

"Was not your great-uncle in command of the *Vengeur* before 1789?"

"Yes."

"Then he would be acquainted with my grandfather, who commanded the *Warwick*."

Maxime looked at Mme. de Restaud and shrugged his shoulders, as who should say, "If he is going to discuss nauti-

inflection in her husband's voice, and knew that it would not be safe to retire to the boudoir; like all women who are compelled to study their husbands' characters in order to have their own way, and whose business it is to know exactly how far they can go without endangering a good understanding, she was very careful to avoid petty collisions in domestic life. It was Eugène who had brought about this untoward incident; so the Countess looked at Maxime and indicated the law student with an air of exasperation. M. de Trailles addressed the Count, the Countess, and Eugène with the pointed remark, "You are busy, I do not want to interrupt you; good-day," and he went.

"Just wait a moment, Maxime!" the Count called after him.

"Come and dine with us," said the Countess, leaving Eugène and her husband together once more. She followed Maxime into the little drawing-room, where they sat together sufficiently long to feel sure that Rastignac had taken his leave.

The law student heard their laughter, and their voices, and the pauses in their talk; he grew malicious, exerted his conversational powers for M. de Restaud, flattered him, and drew him into discussions, to the end that he might see the Countess again and discover the nature of her relations with Father Goriot. This Countess with a husband and a lover, for Maxime clearly was her lover, was a mystery. What was the secret tie that bound her to the old tradesman? This mystery he meant to penetrate, hoping by its means to gain a sovereign ascendency over this fair typical Parisian.

"Anastasie!" the Count called again to his wife.

"Poor Maxime!" she said, addressing the young man. "Come, we must resign ourselves. This evening——"

"I hope, Nasie," he said in her ear, "that you will give orders not to admit that youngster, whose eyes light up like live coals when he looks at you. He will make you a declaration, and compromise you, and then you will compel me to kill him."

"Are you mad, Maxime?" she said. "A young lad of a student is, on the contrary, a capital lightning-conductor; is not that so? Of course, I mean to make Restaud furiously jealous of him."

Maxime burst out laughing, and went out, followed by the Countess, who stood at the window to watch him into his carriage; he shook his whip, and made his horse prance. She only returned when the great gate had been closed after him.

"What do you think, dear?" cried the Count, her husband, "this gentleman's family estate is not far from Verteuil, on the Charente; his great-uncle and my grandfather were acquainted."

"Delighted to find that we have acquaintances in common," said the Countess, with a preoccupied manner.

"More than you think," said Eugène, in a low voice.

"What do you mean?" she asked quickly.

"Why, only just now," said the student, "I saw a gentleman go out at the gate, Father Goriot, my next door neigh-

down before it, she swept her fingers over the keyboard from end to end. R-r-r-r-ah!

"No, madame."

The Comte de Restaud walked to and fro.

"That is a pity; you are without one great means of success.—*Ca-ro, ca-a-ro, ca-a-a-ro, non du-bi-ta-re,*" sang the Countess.

Eugène had a second time waved a magic wand when he uttered Goriot's name, but the effect seemed to be entirely opposite to that produced by the formula "related to Mme. de Beauséant." His position was not unlike that of some visitor permitted as a favor to inspect a private collection of curiosities, when by inadvertence he comes into collision with a glass case full of sculptured figures, and three or four heads, imperfectly secured, fall at the shock. He wished the earth would open and swallow him. Mme. de Restaud's expression was reserved and chilly, her eyes had grown indifferent, and sedulously avoided meeting those of the unlucky student of law.

"Madame," he said, "you wish to talk with M. de Restaud; permit me to wish you good-day——"

The Countess interrupted him by a gesture, saying hastily, "Whenever you come to see us, both M. de Restaud and I shall be delighted to see you."

Eugène made a profound bow and took his leave, followed by M. de Restaud, who insisted, in spite of his remonstrances, on accompanying him into the hall.

"Neither your mistress nor I are at home to that gentleman when he calls," the Count said to Maurice.

As Eugène set foot on the steps, he saw that it was raining.

"Come," said he to himself, "somehow I have just made a mess of it, I do not know how. And now I am going to spoil my hat and coat into the bargain. I ought to stop in my corner, grind away at law, and never look to be anything but a boorish country magistrate. How can I go into society, when to manage properly you want a lot of cabs, varnished boots, gold watch chains, and all sorts of things; you have to wear

word! I will tell Mme. de Beauséant about my adventure; perhaps it may amuse her. Doubtless she will know the secret of the criminal relation between that handsome woman and the old rat without a tail. It would be better to find favor in my cousin's eyes than to come in contact with that shameless woman, who seems to me to have very expensive tastes. Surely the beautiful Vicomtesse's personal interest would turn the scale for me, when the mere mention of her name produces such an effect. Let us look higher. If you set yourself to carry the heights of heaven, you must face God."

The innumerable thoughts that surged through his brain might be summed up in these phrases. He grew calmer, and recovered something of his assurance as he watched the falling rain. He told himself that though he was about to squander two of the precious five-franc pieces that remained to him, the money was well laid out in preserving his coat, boots, and hat; and his cabman's cry of "Gate, if you please," almost put him in spirits. A Swiss, in scarlet and gold, appeared, the great door groaned on its hinges, and Rastignac, with sweet satisfaction, beheld his equipage pass under the archway and stop before the flight of steps beneath the awning. The driver, in a blue-and-red greatcoat, dismounted and let down the step. As Eugène stepped out of the cab, he heard smothered laughter from the peristyle. Three or four lackeys were making merry over the festal appearance of the vehicle. In another moment the law student was enlightened as to the cause of their hilarity; he felt the full force of the contrast between his equipage and one of the smartest broughams in Paris; a coachman, with powdered hair, seemed to find it difficult to hold a pair of spirited horses, who stood chafing the bit. In Mme. de Restaud's courtyard, in the Chaussée d'Antin, he had seen the neat turnout of a young man of six-and-twenty; in the Faubourg Saint-Germain he found the luxurious equipage of a man of rank; thirty thousand francs would not have purchased it.

"Who can be here?" said Eugène to himself. He began to understand, though somewhat tardily, that he must not expect

to find many women in Paris who were not already appropriated, and that the capture of one of these queens would be likely to cost something more than bloodshed. "Confound it all! I expect my cousin also has her Maxime."

He went up the steps, feeling that he was a blighted being. The glass door was opened for him; the servants were as solemn as jackasses under the curry comb. So far, Eugène had only been in the ballroom on the ground floor of the Hôtel Beauséant; the fête had followed so closely on the invitation, that he had not had time to call on his cousin, and had therefore never seen Mme. de Beauséant's apartments; he was about to behold for the first time a great lady among the wonderful and elegant surroundings that reveal her character and reflect her daily life. He was the more curious, because Mme. de Restaud's drawing-room had provided him with a standard of comparison.

At half-past four the Vicomtesse de Beauséant was visible. Five minutes earlier she would not have received her cousin, but Eugène knew nothing of the recognized routine of various

isitors, she gave them such a cold reception, and showed
much interest in the study of the ceiling, that no one could
ail to understand how much he bored her; and when it be-
ame known in Paris that Mme. de Beauséant was bored by
allers between two and four o'clock, she was left in perfect
olitude during that interval. She went to the Bouffons or to
he Opéra with M. de Beauséant and M. d'Ajuda-Pinto; and
I. de Beauséant, like a well-bred man of the world, always
eft his wife and the Portuguese as soon as he had installed
hem. But M. d'Ajuda-Pinto must marry, and a Mlle. de
Rochefide was the young lady. In the whole fashionable
orld there was but one person who as yet knew nothing of
he arrangement, and that was Mme. de Beauséant. Some
f her friends had hinted at the possibility, and she had
aughed at them, believing that envy had prompted those
adies to try to make mischief. And now, though the bans
ere about to be published, and although the handsome
'ortuguese had come that day to break the news to the
'icomtesse, he had not found courage as yet to say one word
bout his treachery. How was it? Nothing is doubtless
ore difficult than the notification of an *ultimatum* of this
ind. There are men who feel more at their ease when they
and up before another man who threatens their lives with
word or pistol than in the presence of a woman who, after
wo hours of lamentations and reproaches, falls into a dead
woon and requires salts. At this moment, therefore, M.
'Ajuda-Pinto was on thorns, and anxious to take his leave.
Ie told himself that in some way or other the news would
each Mme. de Beauséant; he would write, it would be much
etter to do it by letter, and not to utter the words that should
tab her to the heart.

So when the servant announced M. Eugène de Rastignac,
he Marquis d'Ajuda-Pinto trembled with joy. To be sure, a
oving woman shows even more ingenuity in inventing doubts
f her lover than in varying the monotony of his happiness;
nd when she is about to be forsaken, she instinctively inter-
rets every gesture as rapidly as Virgil's courser detected

only happen among the heights. The Vicomtes
her own room, sat down at a table, and took up
dainty notepaper.

"When, instead of dining with the English A
she wrote, "you go to the Rochefides, you owe m
tion, which I am waiting to hear."

She retraced several of the letters, for h
trembling so that they were indistinct; then
note with an initial C for "Claire de Bourgo
the bell.

"Jacques," she said to the servant, who ap
ately, "take this note to M. de Rochefide's h
seven and ask for the Marquis d'Ajuda. I
there, leave the note without waiting for an
not there, bring the note back to me."

ied as

owed in
urse you
Mlle. de

face grew
rumors that
induce M.
rtugal to the
d yesterday."
livres a year,

ney."
arming girl."

ith them to-day;
to me that you

e. "What was the
asked. "The poor
Antoinette, so that
we are speaking of.
our tal row,
, you
ccomp

those
, and le

nged a d
therein
n brain
d the biti
"You co

every one against me, if you do not give me your counsel. I believe that in Paris it is very difficult to meet with a young, beautiful, and wealthy woman of fashion who would be willing to teach me, what you women can explain so well—life. I shall find a M. de Trailles everywhere. So I have come to you to ask you to give me a key to a puzzle, to entreat you to tell me what sort of blunder I made this morning. I mentioned an old man——"

"Madame la Duchesse de Langeais," Jacques cut the student short; Eugène gave expression to his intense annoyance by a gesture.

"If you mean to succeed," said the Vicomtesse in a low voice, "in the first place you must not be so demonstrative."

"Ah! good morning, dear," she continued, and rising and crossing the room, she grasped the Duchess' hands as affectionately as if they had been sisters; the Duchess responded in the prettiest and most gracious way.

"Two intimate friends!" said Rastignac to himself.

felt the question in her very heart, and her face flushed as she answered:

"He was at the Élysée yesterday."

"In attendance?"

"Claire," returned the Duchess, and hatred overflowed in the glances she threw at Mme. de Beauséant; "of course you know that M. d'Ajuda-Pinto is going to marry Mlle. de Rochefide; the bans will be published to-morrow."

This thrust was too cruel; the Vicomtesse's face grew white, but she answered, laughing, "One of those rumors that fools amuse themselves with. What should induce M. d'Ajuda to take one of the noblest names in Portugal to the Rochefides? The Rochefides were only ennobled yesterday."

"But Bertha will have two hundred thousand livres a year, they say."

"M. d'Ajuda is too wealthy to marry for money."

"But, my dear, Mlle. de Rochefide is a charming girl."

"Indeed?"

"And, as a matter of fact, he is dining with them to-day; the thing is settled. It is very surprising to me that you should know so little about it."

Mme. de Beauséant turned to Rastignac. "What was the blunder that you made, monsieur?" she asked. "The poor boy is only just launched into the world, Antoinette, so that he understands nothing of all this that we are speaking of. Be merciful to him, and let us finish our talk to-morrow. Everything will be announced to-morrow, you know, and your kind informal communication can be accompanied by official confirmation."

The Duchess gave Eugène one of those insolent glances that measure a man from head to foot, and leave him crushed and annihilated.

"Madame, I have unwittingly plunged a dagger into Mme. de Restaud's heart; unwittingly—therein lies my offence," said the student of law, whose keen brain had served him sufficiently well, for he had detected the biting epigrams that lurked beneath this friendly talk. "You continue to receive,

possibly you fear, those who know the amount of pain that they deliberately inflict; but a clumsy blunderer who has no idea how deeply he wounds is looked upon as a fool who does not know how to make use of his opportunities, and every one despises him."

Mme. de Beauséant gave the student a glance, one of those glances in which a great soul can mingle dignity and gratitude. It was like balm to the law student, who was still smarting under the Duchess' insolent scrutiny; she had looked at him as an auctioneer might look at some article to appraise its value.

"Imagine, too, that I had just made some progress with the Comte de Restaud; for I should tell you, madame," he went on, turning to the Duchess with a mixture of humility and malice in his manner, "that as yet I am only a poor devil of a student, very much alone in the world, and very poor——"

"You should not tell us that, M. de Rastignac. We women never care about anything that no one else will take."

"Of that I had no idea, madame," answered the law student, "so I rashly came between them. In fact, I got on very well with the lady's husband, and his wife tolerated me for a time until I took it into my head to tell them that I knew some one of whom I had just caught a glimpse as he went out by a back staircase, a man who had given the Countess a kiss at the end of a passage."

"Who was it?" both women asked together.

"An old man who lives at the rate of two louis a month in the Faubourg Saint-Marceau, where I, a poor student, lodge likewise. He is a truly unfortunate creature, everybody laughs at him—we all call him 'Father Goriot.'"

"Why, child that you are," cried the Vicomtesse, "Mme. de Restaud was a Mlle. Goriot!"

"The daughter of a vermicelli manufacturer," the Duchess added; "and when the little creature went to Court, the daughter of a pastry-cook was presented on the same day. Do you remember, Claire? The King began to laugh, and made some joke in Latin about flour. People—what was it?—people——"

"*Ejusdem farinæ*," said Eugène.

"Yes, that was it," said the Duchess.

"Oh! is that her father?" the law student continued, aghast.

"Yes, certainly; the old man had two daughters; he dotes on them, so to speak, though they will scarcely acknowledge him."

"Didn't the second daughter marry a banker with a German name?" the Vicomtesse asked, turning to Mme. de Langeais, "a Baron de Nucingen? And her name is Delphine, is it not? Isn't she a fair-haired woman who has a side-box at the Opéra? She comes sometimes to the Bouffons, and laughs loudly to attract attention."

The Duchess smiled, and said:

"I wonder at you, dear. Why do you take so much interest in people of that kind? One must have been as madly in love as Restaud was, to be infatuated with Mlle. Anastasie and

her flour sacks. Oh! he will not find her a good bargain! She is in M. de Trailles' hands, and he will ruin her."

"And they do not acknowledge their father!" Eugène repeated.

"Oh! well, yes, their father, the father, a father," replied the Vicomtesse, "a kind father who gave them each five or six hundred thousand francs, it is said, to secure their happiness by marrying them well; while he only kept eight or ten thousand livres a year for himself, thinking that his daughters would always be his daughters, thinking that in them he would live his life twice over again, that in their houses he should find two homes, where he would be loved and looked up to, and made much of. And in two years' time both his sons-in-law had turned him out of their houses as if he were one of the lowest outcasts."

Tears came into Eugène's eyes. He was still under the spell of youthful beliefs, he had just left home, pure and sacred feelings had been stirred within him, and this was his first day on the battlefield of civilization in Paris. Genuine

ıcrificed himself to his son, and his daughter-in-law shows im the last degree of insolence. On the other hand, it is ıe son-in-law who turns his wife's mother out of the house. sometimes hear it said that there is nothing dramatic about ɔciety in these days; but the Drama of the Son-in-law is ppalling, to say nothing of our marriages, which have come ɔ be very poor farces. I can explain how it all came about ı the old vermicelli maker's case. I think I recollect that 'oriot——"

"Goriot, madame."

"Yes, that Moriot was once President of his Section durıg the Revolution. He was in the secret of the famous carcity of grain, and laid the foundation of his fortune in hose days by selling flour for ten times its cost. He had s much flour as he wanted. My grandmother's steward sold im immense quantities. No doubt Noriot shared the plunıer with the Committee of Public Salvation, as that sort of erson always did. I recollect the steward telling my grandıother that she might live at Grandvilliers in complete seurity, because her corn was as good as a certificate of civism. Vell, then, this Loriot, who sold corn to those butchers, as never had but one passion, they say—he idolizes his aughters. He settled one of them under Restaud's roof, nd grafted the other into the Nucingen family tree, the Baron de Nucingen being a rich banker who had turned Royalist. You can quite understand that so long as Bonaparte ras Emperor, the two sons-in-law could manage to put up rith the old Ninety-three; but after the restoration of the Bourbons, M. de Restaud felt bored by the old man's society, nd the banker was still more tired of it. His daughters were till fond of him; they wanted 'to keep the goat and the abbage,' so they used to see the Joriot whenever there was o one there, under pretence of affection. 'Come to-day, apa, we shall have you all to ourselves, and that will be much icer!' and all that sort of thing. As for me, dear, I believe hat love has second-sight: poor Ninety-three; his heart must ave bled. He saw that his daughters were ashamed of him,

that if they loved their husbands his visits must make mischief. So he immolated himself. He made the sacrifice because he was a father; he went into voluntary exile. His daughters were satisfied, so he thought that he had done the best thing he could; but it was a family crime, and father and daughters were accomplices. You see this sort of thing everywhere. What could this old Doriot have been but a splash of mud in his daughters' drawing-rooms? He would only have been in the way, and bored other people, besides being bored himself. And this that happened between father and daughters may happen to the prettiest woman in Paris and the man she loves the best; if her love grows tiresome, he will go; he will descend to the basest trickery to leave her. It is the same with all love and friendship. Our heart is a treasury; if you pour out all its wealth at once, you are bankrupt. We show no more mercy to the affection that reveals its utmost extent than we do to another kind of prodigal who has not a penny left. Their father had given them all he had. For twenty years he had given his whole heart

Mme. de Beauséant did not hear him; she was absorbed in her own thoughts. For several minutes the silence remained unbroken till the law student became almost paralyzed with embarrassment, and was equally afraid to go or stay or speak a word.

"The world is basely ungrateful and ill-natured," said the Vicomtesse at last. "No sooner does a trouble befall you than a friend is ready to bring the tidings and to probe your heart with the point of a dagger while calling on you to admire the handle. Epigrams and sarcasms already! Ah! I will defend myself!"

She raised her head like the great lady that she was, and lightnings flashed from her proud eyes.

"Ah!" she said, as she saw Eugène, "are you there?"

"Still," he said piteously.

"Well, then, M. de Rastignac, deal with the world as it deserves. You are determined to succeed? I will help you. You shall sound the depths of corruption in woman; you shall measure the extent of man's pitiful vanity. Deeply as I am versed in such learning, there were pages in the book of life that I had not read. Now I know all. The more cold-blooded your calculations, the further you will go. Strike ruthlessly; you will be feared. Men and women for you must be nothing more than post-horses; take a fresh relay, and leave the last to drop by the roadside; in this way you will reach the goal of your ambition. You will be nothing here, you see, unless a woman interests herself in you; and she must be young and wealthy, and a woman of the world. Yet, if you have a heart, lock it carefully away like a treasure; do not let any one suspect it, or you will be lost; you would cease to be the executioner, you would take the victim's place. And if ever you should love, never let your secret escape you! trust no one until you are very sure of the heart to which you open your heart. Learn to mistrust every one; take every precaution for the sake of the love which does not exist as yet. Listen, Miguel"—the name slipped from her so naturally that she did not notice her mistake—"there is some-

thing still more appalling than the ingratitude of daughters who have cast off their old father and wish that he were dead, and that is a rivalry between two sisters. Restaud comes of a good family; his wife has been received into their circle; she has been presented at court; and her sister, her wealthy sister, Mme. Delphine de Nucingen, the wife of a great capitalist, is consumed with envy, and ready to die of spleen. There is a gulf set between the sisters—indeed, they are sisters no longer—the two women who refuse to acknowledge their father do not acknowledge each other. So Mme. de Nucingen would lap all the mud that lies between the Rue Saint-Lazare and the Rue de Grenelle to gain admittance to my salon. She fancied that she should gain her end through de Marsay; she has made herself de Marsay's slave, and she bores him. De Marsay cares very little about her. If you will introduce her to me, you will be her darling, her Benjamin; she will idolize you. If, after that, you can love her, do so; if not, make her useful. I will ask her to come once or twice to one of my great crushes, but I will never re-

not undeceive them yourself. There will be nothing you may not aspire to; you will go everywhere, and you will find out what the world is—an assemblage of fools and knaves. But you must be neither the one nor the other. I am giving you my name like Ariadne's clue of thread to take with you into this labyrinth; make no unworthy use of it," she said, with a queenly glance and curve of her throat; "give it back to me unsullied. And now, go; leave me. We women also have our battles to fight."

"And if you should ever need some one who would gladly set a match to a train for you——"

"Well?" she asked.

He tapped his heart, smiled in answer to his cousin's smile, and went.

It was five o'clock, and Eugène was hungry; he was afraid lest he should not be in time for dinner, a misgiving which made him feel that it was pleasant to be borne so quickly across Paris. This sensation of physical comfort left his mind free to grapple with the thoughts that assailed him. A mortification usually sends a young man of his age into a furious rage; he shakes his fist at society, and vows vengeance when his belief in himself is shaken. Just then Rastignac was overwhelmed by the words, "You have shut the Countess' door against you."

"I shall call!" he said to himself, "and if Mme. de Beauséant is right, if I never find her at home—I . . . well, Mme. de Restaud shall meet me in every salon in Paris. I will learn to fence, and have some pistol practice, and kill that Maxime of hers!"

"And money?" cried an inward monitor. "How about money, where is that to come from?" And all at once the wealth displayed in the Countess de Restaud's drawing-room rose before his eyes. That was the luxury which Goriot's daughter had loved too well; the gilding, the ostentatious splendor, the unintelligent luxury of the parvenu, the riotous extravagance of a courtesan. Then the attractive vision suddenly went under an eclipse as he remembered the stately

grandeur of the Hôtel de Beauséant. As his fancy wandered among these lofty regions in the great world of Paris, innumerable dark thoughts gathered in his heart; his ideas widened, and his conscience grew more elastic. He saw the world as it is; saw how the rich lived beyond the jurisdiction of law and public opinion, and found in success the *ultima ratio mundi*.

"Vautrin is right, success is virtue!" he said to himself.

Arrived in the Rue Neuve-Sainte-Geneviève, he rushed up to his room for ten francs wherewith to satisfy the demands of the cabman, and went in to dinner. He glanced round the squalid room, saw the eighteen poverty-stricken creatures about to feed like cattle in their stalls, and the sight filled him with loathing. The transition was too sudden, and the contrast was so violent that it could not but act as a powerful stimulant; his ambition developed and grew beyond all bounds. On the one hand, he beheld a vision of social life in its most charming and refined forms, of quick-

hundred thousand livres a year at least; and a lodger in the Maison Vauquer is not exactly Fortune's favorite."

Vautrin's glance at Rastignac was half-paternal, half-contemptuous. "Puppy!" it seemed to say; "I should make one mouthful of him!" Then he answered:

"You are in a bad humor; perhaps your visit to the beautiful Comtesse de Restaud was not a success."

"She has shut her door against me because I told her that her father dined at our table," cried Rastignac.

Glances were exchanged all round the room; Father Goriot looked down.

"You have sent some snuff into my eye," he said to his neighbor, turning a little aside to rub his hand over his face.

"Any one who molests Father Goriot will have henceforward to reckon with me," said Eugène, looking at the old man's neighbor; "he is worth all the rest of us put together.—I am not speaking of the ladies," he added, turning in the direction of Mlle. Taillefer.

Eugène's remarks produced a sensation, and his tone silenced the dinner-table. Vautrin alone spoke. "If you are going to champion Father Goriot, and set up for his responsible editor into the bargain, you had need be a crack shot and know how to handle the foils," he said, banteringly.

"So I intend," said Eugène.

"Then you are taking the field to-day?"

"Perhaps," Rastignac answered. "But I owe no account of myself to any one, especially as I do not try to find out what other people do of a night."

Vautrin looked askance at Rastignac.

"If you do not mean to be deceived by the puppets, my boy, you must go behind and see the whole show, and not peep through holes in the curtain. That is enough," he added, seeing that Eugène was about to fly into a passion. "We can have a little talk whenever you like."

There was a general feeling of gloom and constraint. Father Goriot was so deeply dejected by the student's remark that he did not notice the change in the disposition of his

fellow-lodgers, nor know that he had met with a champion capable of putting an end to the persecution.

"Then, M. Goriot sitting there is the father of a countess," said Mme. Vauquer in a low voice.

"And of a baroness," answered Rastignac.

"That is about all he is capable of," said Bianchon to Rastignac; "I have taken a look at his head; there is only one bump—the bump of Paternity; he must be an *eternal father.*"

Eugène was too intent on his thoughts to laugh at Bianchon's joke. He determined to profit by Mme. de Beauséant's counsels, and was asking himself how he could obtain the necessary money. He grew grave. The wide savannas of the world stretched before his eyes; all things lay before him, nothing was his. Dinner came to an end, the others went, and he was left in the dining-room.

"So you have seen my daughter?" Goriot spoke tremulously, and the sound of his voice broke in upon Eugène's dreams. The young man took the elder's hand, and looked at him with something like kindness in her eyes.

I go to see the Vicomtesse de Beauséant; she is using her influence for me; I am obliged to go into society, and I have not a penny to lay out on clean gloves. I can manage to exist on bread and water, or go without food, if need be, but I cannot do without the tools with which they cultivate the vineyards in this country. I must resolutely make up my mind at once to make my way, or stick in the mire for the rest of my days. I know that all your hopes are set on me, and I want to realize them quickly. Sell some of your old jewelry, my kind mother; I will give you other jewels very soon. I know enough of our affairs at home to know all that such a sacrifice means, and you must not think that I would lightly ask you to make it; I should be a monster if I could. You must think of my entreaty as a cry forced from me by imperative necessity. Our whole future lies in the subsidy with which I must begin my first campaign, for life in Paris is one continual battle. If you cannot otherwise procure the whole of the money, and are forced to sell our aunt's lace, tell her that I will send her some still handsomer," and so forth.

He wrote to ask each of his sisters for their savings—would they despoil themselves for him, and keep the sacrifice a secret from the family? To his request he knew that they would not fail to respond gladly, and he added to it an appeal to their delicacy by touching the chord of honor that vibrates so loudly in young and highly-strung natures.

Yet when he had written the letters, he could not help feeling misgivings in spite of his youthful ambition; his heart beat fast, and he trembled. He knew the spotless nobleness of the lives buried away in the lonely manor house; he knew what trouble and what joy his request would cause his sisters, and how happy they would be as they talked at the bottom of the orchard of that dear brother of theirs in Paris. Visions rose before his eyes; a sudden strong light revealed his sisters secretly counting over their little store, devising some girlish stratagem by which the money could be sent to

him *incognito,* essaying, for the first time in their lives, a piece of deceit that reached the sublime in its unselfishness.

"A sister's heart is a diamond for purity, a deep sea of tenderness!" he said to himself. He felt ashamed of those letters.

What power there must be in the petitions put up by such hearts; how pure the fervor that bears their souls to Heaven in prayer! What exquisite joy they would find in self-sacrifice! What a pang for his mother's heart if she could not send him all that he asked for! And this noble affection, these sacrifices made at such terrible cost, were to serve as the ladder by which he meant to climb to Delphine de Nucingen. A few tears, like the last grains of incense flung upon the sacred altar fire of the hearth, fell from his eyes. He walked up and down, and despair mingled with his emotion. Father Goriot saw him through the half-open door.

"What is the matter, sir?" he asked from the threshold.

"Ah! my good neighbor, I am as much a son and brother as you are a father. You do well to fear for the Comtesse Anas-

through a reasoning process familiar to most students. He had seen the advisability of deferring his studies to the last moment before going up for his examinations; he made up his mind to cram his second and third years' work into the third year, when he meant to begin to work in earnest, and to complete his studies in law with one great effort. In the meantime he had fifteen months in which to navigate the ocean of Paris, to spread the nets and set the lines that should bring him a protectress and a fortune. Twice during that week he saw Mme. de Beauséant; he did not go to her house until he had seen the Marquis d'Ajuda drive away.

Victory for yet a few more days was with the great lady, the most poetic figure in the Faubourg Saint-Germain; and the marriage of the Marquis d'Ajuda-Pinto with Mlle. de Rochefide was postponed. The dread of losing her happiness filled those days with a fever of joy unknown before, but the end was only so much the nearer. The Marquis d'Ajuda and the Rochefides agreed that this quarrel and reconciliation was a very fortunate thing; Mme. de Beauséant (so they hoped) would gradually become reconciled to the idea of the marriage, and in the end would be brought to sacrifice d'Ajuda's morning visits to the exigencies of a man's career, exigencies which she must have foreseen. In spite of the most solemn promises, daily renewed, M. d'Ajuda was playing a part, and the Vicomtesse was eager to be deceived. "Instead of taking the leap heroically from the window, she is falling headlong down the staircase," said her most intimate friend, the Duchesse de Langeais. Yet this after-glow of happiness lasted long enough for the Vicomtesse to be of service to her young cousin. She had a half-superstitious affection for him. Eugène had shown her sympathy and devotion at a crisis when a woman sees no pity, no real comfort in any eyes; when if a man is ready with soothing flatteries, it is because he has an interested motive.

Rastignac made up his mind that he must learn the whole of Goriot's previous history; he would come to his bearings before attempting to board the Maison de Nucingen. The results of his inquiries may be given briefly as follows:—

In the days before the Revolution, Jean-Joachim Goriot was simply a workman in the employ of a vermicelli maker. He was a skilful, thrifty workman, sufficiently enterprising to buy his master's business when the latter fell a chance victim to the disturbances of 1789. Goriot established himself in the Rue de la Jussienne, close to the Corn Exchange. His plain good sense led him to accept the position of President of the Section, so as to secure for his business the protection of those in power at that dangerous epoch. This prudent step had led to success; the foundations of his fortune were laid in the time of the Scarcity (real or artificial), when the price of grain of all kinds rose enormously in Paris. People used to fight for bread at the bakers' doors; while other persons went to the grocers' shops and bought Italian paste foods without brawling over it. It was during this year that Goriot made the money, which, at a later time, was to give him all the advantage of the great capitalist over the small buyer; he had, moreover, the usual luck of average ability; his mediocrity was the salvation of him. He excited no one's envy;

situation; and in the routine of business he was as patient and plodding as a soldier on the march. But beyond this business horizon he could not see. He used to spend his hours of leisure on the threshold of his shop, leaning against the framework of the door. Take him from his dark little counting-house, and he became once more the rough, slow-witted workman, a man who cannot understand a piece of reasoning, who is indifferent to all intellectual pleasures, and falls asleep at the play, a Parisian Dolibom in short, against whose stupidity other minds are powerless.

Natures of this kind are nearly all alike; in almost all of them you will find some hidden depth of sublime affection. Two all-absorbing affections filled the vermicelli maker's heart to the exclusion of every other feeling; into them he seemed to put all the forces of his nature, as he put the whole power of his brain into the corn trade. He had regarded his wife, the only daughter of a rich farmer of La Brie, with a devout admiration; his love for her had been boundless. Goriot had felt the charm of a lovely and sensitive nature, which, in its delicate strength, was the very opposite of his own. Is there any instinct more deeply implanted in the heart of man than the pride of protection, a protection which is constantly exerted for a fragile and defenceless creature? Join love thereto, the warmth of gratitude that all generous souls feel for the source of their pleasures, and you have the explanation of many strange incongruities in human nature.

After seven years of unclouded happiness, Goriot lost his wife. It was very unfortunate for him. She was beginning to gain an ascendency over him in other ways; possibly she might have brought that barren soil under cultivation, she might have widened his ideas and given other directions to his thoughts. But when she was dead, the instinct of fatherhood developed in him till it almost became a mania. All the affection balked by death seemed to turn to his daughters, and he found full satisfaction for his heart in loving them. More or less brilliant proposals were made to him from time to

"My Dear Child,—I am sending you the money that you asked for. Make a good use of it. Even to save your life I could not raise so large a sum a second time without your father's knowledge, and there would be trouble about it. We should be obliged to mortgage the land. It is impossible to judge of the merits of schemes of which I am ignorant; but what sort of schemes can they be, that you should fear to tell me about them? Volumes of explanation would not have been needed; we mothers can understand at a word, and that word would have spared me the anguish of uncertainty. I do not know how to hide the painful impression that your letter has made upon me, my dear son. What can you have felt when you were moved to send this chill of dread through my heart? It must have been very painful to you to write the letter that gave me so much pain as I read it. To what courses are you committed? You are going to appear to be something that you are not, and your whole life and success depends upon this? You are about to see a society into which you cannot enter without rushing into expense that you can-

it was, even down to your gloves. 'But I have a weakness for the eldest!' she said gaily. You must love your aunt very much, dear Eugène. I shall wait till you have succeeded before telling you all that she has done for you, or her money would burn your fingers. You, who are young, do not know what it is to part with something that is a piece of your past! But what would we not sacrifice for your sakes? Your aunt says that I am to send you a kiss on the forehead from her, and that kiss is to bring you luck again and again, she says. She would have written you herself, the dear kind-hearted woman, but she is troubled with the gout in her fingers just now. Your father is very well. The vintage of 1819 has turned out better than we expected. Good-bye, dear boy; I will say nothing about your sisters, because Laure is writing to you, and I must let her have the pleasure of giving you all the home news. Heaven send that you may succeed! Oh! yes, dear Eugène, you must succeed. I have come, through you, to a knowledge of a pain so sharp that I do not think I could endure it a second time. I have come to know what it is to be poor, and to long for money for my children's sake. There, good-bye! Do not leave us for long without news of you; and here, at the last, take a kiss from your mother."

By the time Eugène had finished the letter he was in tears. He thought of Father Goriot crushing his silver keepsake into a shapeless mass before he sold it to meet his daughter's bill of exchange.

"Your mother has broken up her jewels for you," he said to himself; "your aunt shed tears over those relics of hers before she sold them for your sake. What right have you to heap execrations on Anastasie? You have followed her example; you have selfishly sacrificed others to your own future, and she sacrifices her father to her lover; and of you two, which is the worse?"

He was ready to renounce his attempts; he could not bear to take that money. The fires of remorse burned in his heart, and gave him intolerable pain, the generous secret remorse which men seldom take into account when they sit in judg-

ment upon their fellow-men; but perhaps the angels in heaven, beholding it, pardon the criminal whom our justice condemns. Rastignac opened his sister's letter; its simplicity and kindness revived his heart.

"Your letter came just at the right time, dear brother. Agathe and I had thought of so many different ways of spending our money, that we did not know what to buy with it; and now you have come in, and, like the servant who upset all the watches that belonged to the King of Spain, you have restored harmony; for, really and truly, we did not know which of all the things we wanted we wanted most, and we were always quarreling about it, never thinking, dear Eugène, of a way of spending our money which would satisfy us completely. Agathe jumped for joy. Indeed, we have been like two mad things all day, 'to such a prodigious degree' (as aunt would say), that mother said, with her severe expression, 'Whatever can be the matter with you, mesdemoiselles?' I think if we had been scolded a little, we

way to Ruffec, where we handed over the coin, without more ado, to M. Grimbert, of the Messageries Royales. We came back again like swallows on the wing. 'Don't you think that happiness has made us lighter?' Agathe said. We said all sorts of things, which I shall not tell you, Monsieur le Parisien, because they were all about you. Oh, we love you dearly, dear brother; it was all summed up in those few words. As for keeping the secret, little masqueraders like us are capable of anything (according to our aunt), even of holding our tongues. Our mother has been on a mysterious journey to Angoulême, and the aunt went with her, not without solemn councils, from which we were shut out, and M. le Baron likewise. They are silent as to the weighty political considerations that prompted their mission, and conjectures are rife in the State of Rastignac. The Infantas are embroidering a muslin robe with open-work sprigs for her Majesty the Queen; the work progresses in the most profound secrecy. There be but two more breadths to finish. A decree has gone forth that no wall shall be built on the side of Verteuil, but that a hedge shall be planted instead thereof. Our subjects may sustain some disappointment of fruit and espaliers, but strangers will enjoy a fair prospect. Should the heir-presumptive lack pocket-handkerchiefs, be it known unto him that the dowager Lady of Marcillac, exploring the recesses of her drawers and boxes (known respectively as Pompeii and Herculaneum), having brought to light a fair piece of cambric whereof she wotted not, the Princesses Agathe and Laure place at their brother's disposal their thread, their needles, and hands somewhat of the reddest. The two young Princes, Don Henri and Don Gabriel, retain their fatal habits of stuffing themselves with grape-jelly, of teasing their sisters, of taking their pleasure by going a-bird-nesting, and of cutting switches for themselves from the osier-beds, maugre the laws of the realm. Moreover, they list not to learn naught, wherefore the Papal Nuncio (called of the commonalty, M. le Curé) threateneth them with excommunication, since that they neglect the sacred canons of grammatical construction

for the construction of other canon, deadly engines made of the stems of elder.

"Farewell, dear brother, never did letter carry so many wishes for your success, so much love fully satisfied. You will have a great deal to tell us when you come home! You will tell me everything, won't you? I am the oldest. From something the aunt let fall, we think you must have had some success.

"Something was said of a lady, but nothing more was said . . .

"Of course not, in our family! Oh, by-the-by, Eugène, would you rather that we made that piece of cambric into shirts for you instead of pocket-handkerchiefs? If you want some really nice shirts at once, we ought to lose no time in beginning upon them; and if the fashion is different now in Paris, send us one for a pattern; we want more particularly to know about the cuffs. Good-bye! Good-bye! Take my kiss on the left side of your forehead, on the temple that

and sounded, and had finally surrendered. When Rastignac met M. de Trailles, he had seen at once how great a part the tailor plays in a young man's career; a tailor is either a deadly enemy or a staunch friend, with an invoice for a bond of friendship; between these two extremes there is, alack! no middle term. In this representative of his craft Eugène discovered a man who understood that his was a sort of paternal function for young men at their entrance into life, who regarded himself as a stepping-stone between a young man's present and future. And Rastignac in gratitude made the man's fortune by an epigram of a kind in which he excelled at a later period of his life.

"I have twice known a pair of trousers turned out by him make a match of twenty thousand livres a year!"

Fifteen hundred francs, and as many suits of clothes as he chose to order! At that moment the poor child of the South felt no more doubts of any kind. The young man went down to breakfast with the indefinable air which the consciousness of the possession of money gives to youth. No sooner are the coins slipped into a student's pocket than his wealth, in imagination at least, is piled into a fantastic column, which affords him a moral support. He begins to hold up his head as he walks; he is conscious that he has a means of bringing his powers to bear on a given point; he looks you straight in the face; his gestures are quick and decided; only yesterday he was diffident and shy, any one might have pushed him aside; to-morrow, he will take the wall of a prime minister. A miracle has been wrought in him. Nothing is beyond the reach of his ambition, and his ambition soars at random; he is light-hearted, generous, and enthusiastic; in short, the fledgling bird has discovered that he has wings. A poor student snatches at every chance pleasure much as a dog runs all sorts of risks to steal a bone, cracking it and sucking the marrow as he flies from pursuit; but a young man who can rattle a few runaway gold coins in his pocket can take his pleasure deliberately, can taste the whole of the sweets of secure possession; he soars far above earth; he has forgotten

what the word *poverty* means; all Paris is his. Those are days when the whole world shines radiant with light, when everything glows and sparkles before the eyes of youth, days that bring joyous energy that is never brought into harness, days of debts and of painful fears that go hand in hand with every delight. Those who do not know the left bank of the Seine between the Rue Saint-Jacques and the Rue des Saints-Pères know nothing of life.

"Ah! if the women of Paris but knew," said Rastignac, as he devoured Mme. Vauquer's stewed pears (at five for a penny), "they would come here in search of a lover."

Just then a porter from the Messageries Royales appeared at the door of the room; they had previously heard the bell ring as the wicket opened to admit him. The man asked for M. Eugène de Rastignac, holding out two bags for him to take, and a form of receipt for his signature. Vautrin's keen glance cut Eugène like a lash.

"Now you will be able to pay for those fencing lessons and go to the shooting gallery," he said.

encounter of wits at dinner that day, after Eugène came in from calling on Mme. de Beauséant, he had made up his mind that Vautrin was insufferable. For a week, in fact, they had both kept silence in each other's presence, and watched each other. The student tried in vain to account to himself for this attitude.

An idea, of course, gains in force by the energy with which it is expressed; it strikes where the brain sends it, by a law as mathematically exact as the law that determines the course of a shell from a mortar. The amount of impression it makes is not to be determined so exactly. Sometimes, in an impressible nature, the idea works havoc, but there are, no less, natures so robustly protected, that this sort of projectile falls flat and harmless on skulls of triple brass, as cannon-shot against solid masonry; then there are flaccid and spongy-fibred natures into which ideas from without sink like spent bullets into the earthworks of a redoubt. Rastignac's head was something of the powder-magazine order; the least shock sufficed to bring about an explosion. He was too quick, too young, not to be readily accessible to ideas; and open to that subtle influence of thought and feeling in others which causes so many strange phenomena that make an impression upon us of which we are all unconscious at the time. Nothing escaped his mental vision; he was lynx-eyed; in him the mental powers of perception, which seem like duplicates of the senses, had the mysterious power of swift projection that astonishes us in intellects of a high order—slingers who are quick to detect the weak spot in any armor.

In the past month Eugène's good qualities and defects had rapidly developed with his character. Intercourse with the world and the endeavor to satisfy his growing desires had brought out his defects. But Rastignac came from the South side of the Loire, and had the good qualities of his countrymen. He had the impetuous courage of the South, that rushes to the attack of a difficulty, as well as the southern impatience of delay or suspense. These traits are held to be defects in the North; they made the fortune of Murat, but

they likewise cut short his career. The moral would appear to be that when the dash and boldness of the South side of the Loire meets, in a southern temperament, with the guile of the North, the character is complete, and such a man will gain (and keep) the crown of Sweden.

Rastignac, therefore, could not stand the fire from Vautrin's batteries for long without discovering whether this was a friend or a foe. He felt as if this strange being was reading his inmost soul, and dissecting his feelings, while Vautrin himself was so close and secretive that he seemed to have something of the profound and unmoved serenity of a sphinx, seeing and hearing all things and saying nothing. Eugène, conscious of that money in his pocket, grew rebellious.

"Be so good as to wait a moment," he said to Vautrin, as the latter rose, after slowly emptying his coffee-cup, sip by sip.

"What for?" inquired the older man, as he put on his large-brimmed hat and took up the sword-cane that he was wont to

"Well . . . so I am," he answered. He held both the bags in his hand, and had risen to go up to his room.

Vautrin made as if he were going out through the sitting-room, and the student turned to go through the second door that opened into the square lobby at the foot of the staircase.

"Do you know, Monsieur le Marquis de Rastignacorama, that what you were saying just now was not exactly polite?" Vautrin remarked, as he rattled his sword-cane across the panels of the sitting-room door, and came up to the student.

Rastignac looked coolly at Vautrin, drew him to the foot of the staircase, and shut the dining-room door. They were standing in the little square lobby between the kitchen and the dining-room; the place was lighted by an iron-barred fanlight above a door that gave access into the garden. Sylvie came out of her kitchen, and Eugène chose that moment to say:

"*Monsieur* Vautrin, I am not a marquis, and my name is not Rastignacorama."

"They will fight," said Mlle. Michonneau, in an indifferent tone.

"Fight!" echoed Poiret.

"Not they," replied Mme. Vauquer, lovingly fingering her pile of coins.

"But there they are under the lime-trees," cried Mlle. Victorine, who had risen so that she might see out into the garden. "Poor young man! he was in the right, after all."

"We must go upstairs, my pet," said Mme. Couture; "it is no business of ours."

At the door, however, Mme. Couture and Victorine found their progress barred by the portly form of Sylvie the cook.

"What ever can have happened?" she said. "M. Vautrin said to M. Eugène, 'Let us have an explanation!' then he took him by the arm, and there they are, out among the artichokes."

Vautrin came in while she was speaking. "Mamma Vauquer," he said smiling, "don't frighten yourself at all. I am only going to try my pistols under the lime-trees."

"Oh! monsieur," cried Victorine, clasping her hands as she spoke, "why do you want to kill M. Eugène?"

Vautrin stepped back a pace or two, and gazed at Victorine.

"Oh! this is something fresh!" he exclaimed in a bantering tone, that brought the color into the poor girl's face. "That young fellow yonder is very nice, isn't he?" he went on. "You have given me a notion, my pretty child; I will make you both happy."

Mme. Couture laid her hand on the arm of her ward, and drew the girl away, as she said in her ear:

"Why, Victorine, I cannot imagine what has come over you this morning."

"I don't want any shots fired in my garden," said Mme. Vauquer. "You will frighten the neighborhood and bring the police up here all in a moment."

"Come, keep cool, Mamma Vauquer," answered Vautrin. "There, there; it's all right; we will go to the shooting-gallery."

He went back to Rastignac, laying his hand familiarly on

Rastignac deposited his money on the table, and sat down. was consumed with curiosity, which the sudden change the manner of the man before him had excited to the high- pitch. Here was a strange being who, a moment ago, l talked of killing him, and now posed as his protector. 'You would like to know who I really am, what I was, and at I do now," Vautrin went on. "You want to know too ch, youngster. Come! come! keep cool! You will hear re astonishing things than that. I have had my misfor- nes. Just hear me out first, and you shall have your turn erwards. Here is my past in three words. Who am I? utrin. What do I do? Just what I please. Let us change subject. You want to know my character. I am good- tured to those who do me a good turn, or to those whose arts speak to mine. These last may do anything they like h me; they may bruise my shins, and I shall not tell them 'mind what they are about'; but, *nom d'une pipe,* the devil nself is not an uglier customer than I can be if people annoy , or if I don't happen to take to them; and you may just well know at once that I think no more of killing a man an of that," and he spat before him as he spoke. "Only en it is absolutely necessary to do so, I do my best to kill n properly. I am what you call an artist. I have read nvenuto Cellini's *Memoirs,* such as you see me; and, what more, in Italian! A fine-spirited fellow he was! From n I learned to follow the example set us by Providence. o strikes us down at random, and to admire the beautiful enever and wherever it is found. And, setting other ques- ns aside, is it not a glorious part to play, when you pit your- f against mankind, and the luck is on your side? I have ught a good deal about the constitution of your present ial Dis-order. A duel is downright childish, my boy! utter nsense and folly! When one of two living men must be out of the way, none but an idiot would leave chance to ide which it is to be; and in a duel it is a toss-up—heads tails—and there you are! Now I, for instance, can hit ace in the middle of a card five times running,

send one bullet after another through the same hole, and at thirty-five paces, moreover! With that little accomplishment you might think yourself certain of killing your man, mightn't you? Well, I have fired, at twenty paces, and missed, and the rogue who had never handled a pistol in his life—look here!"—(he unbottoned his waistcoat and exposed his chest, covered, like a bear's back, with a shaggy fell; the student gave a startled shudder)—"he was a raw lad, but he made his mark on me," the extraordinary man went on, drawing Rastignac's fingers over a deep scar on his breast. "But that happened when I myself was a mere boy; I was one-and-twenty then (your age), and I had some beliefs left—in a woman's love, and in a pack of rubbish that you will be over head and ears in directly. You and I were to have fought just now, weren't we? You might have killed me. Suppose that I were put under the earth, where would you be? You would have to clear out of this, go to Switzerland, draw on papa's purse—and he has none too much in it as it is. I mean to open your eyes to your

fifteen, and the other ten), that is about the roll-call of the crew. The aunt brings up the two sisters; the curé comes and teaches the boys Latin. Boiled chestnuts are oftener on the table than white bread. Papa makes a suit of clothes last a long while; if mamma has a different dress winter and summer, it is about as much as she has; the sisters manage as best they can. I know all about it; I have lived in the south.

"That is how things are at home. They send you twelve hundred francs a year, and the whole property only brings in three thousand francs all told. We have a cook and a manservant; papa is a baron, and we must keep up appearances. Then we have our ambitions; we are connected with the Beauséants, and we go afoot through the streets; we want to be rich, and we have not a penny; we eat Mme. Vauquer's messes, and we like grand dinners in the Faubourg Saint-Germain; we sleep on a truckle-bed, and dream of a mansion! I do not blame you for wanting these things. It is not given to every one to have ambition, my little trump. What sort of men do the women run after? Men of ambition. Men of ambition have stronger frames, their blood is richer in iron, their hearts are warmer than those of ordinary men. Women feel that when their power is greatest they look their best, and that those are their happiest hours; they like power in men, and prefer the strongest even if it is a power that may be their own destruction. I am going to make an inventory of your desires in order to put the question at issue before you. Here it is:—

"We are as hungry as a wolf, and those newly-cut teeth of ours are sharp; what are we to do to keep the pot boiling? In the first place, we have the Code to browse upon; it is not amusing, and we are none the wiser for it, but that cannot be helped. So far so good. We mean to make an advocate of ourselves with a prospect of one day being made President of a Court of Assize, when we shall send poor devils, our betters, to the galleys with a T.F.* on their shoulders, so that the rich may be convinced that they can sleep in peace. There

* *Travaux forcés.*

is no fun in that; and you are a long while coming to it; for, to begin with, there are two years of nauseous drudgery in Paris, we see all the lollipops that we long for out of our reach. It is tiresome to want things and never to have them. If you were a pallid creature of the mollusk order, you would have nothing to fear, but it is different when you have the hot blood of a lion and are ready to get into a score of scrapes every day of your life. This is the ghastliest form of torture known in this inferno of God's making, and you will give in to it. Or suppose that you are a good boy, drink nothing stronger than milk, and bemoan your hard lot; you, with your generous nature, will endure hardships that would drive a dog mad, and make a start, after long waiting, as deputy to some rascal or other in a hole of a place where the Government will fling you a thousand francs a year like the scraps that are thrown to the butcher's dog. Bark at thieves, plead the cause of the rich, send men of heart to the guillotine, that is your work! Many thanks! If you have no influence, you

that elevated position; that there are some mountebanks ıong you who would sell their family to screw their fornes a peg higher. If this sort of thing sickens you, try other course. The Baron de Rastignac thinks of becoming advocate, does he? There's a nice prospect for you! Ten ars of drudgery straight away. You are obliged to live at the te of a thousand francs a month; you must have a library law books, live in chambers, go into society, go down on ur knees to ask a solicitor for briefs, lick the dust off the or of the Palais de Justice. If this kind of business led to ıything, I should not say no; but just give me the names of e advocates here in Paris who by the time that they are ty are making fifty thousand francs a year! Bah! I would oner turn pirate on the high seas than have my soul shrivel inside me like that. How will you find the capital? here is but one way, marry a woman who has money. There no fun in it. Have you a mind to marry? You hang a one round your neck; for if you marry for money, what comes of our exalted notions of honor and so forth? You ight as well fly in the face of social conventions at once. it nothing to crawl like a serpent before your wife, to lick r mother's feet, to descend to dirty actions that would sicken ine—faugh!—never mind if you at least make your fortune. ut you will be as doleful as a dripstone if you marry for oney. It is better to wrestle with men than to wrangle at me with your wife. You are at the crossway of the roads of fe, my boy; choose your way.

"But you have chosen already. You have gone to see your usin of Beauséant, and you have had an inkling of luxury; u have been to Mme. de Restaud's house, and in Father oriot's daughter you have seen a glimpse of the Parisienne r the first time. That day you came back with a word ritten upon your forehead. I knew it, I could read it—*'success!'* Yes, success at any price. 'Bravo,' said I to myself, 'here is the sort of fellow for me.' You wanted money. 'here was it to come from? You have drained your sisters' ttle hoard (all brothers sponge more or less on their sisters).

Those fifteen hundred francs of yours (got together, God knows how! in a country where there are more chestnuts than five-franc pieces) will slip away like soldiers after pillage. And, then, what will you do? Shall you begin to work? Work, or what you understand by work at this moment, means, for a man of Poiret's calibre, an old age in Mamma Vauquer's lodging-house. There are fifty thousand young men in your position at this moment, all bent as you are on solving one and the same problem—how to acquire a fortune rapidly. You are but a unit in that aggregate. You can guess, therefore, what efforts you must make, how desperate the struggle is. There are not fifty thousand good positions for you; you must fight and devour one another like spiders in a pot. Do you know how a man makes his way here? By brilliant genius or by skilful corruption. You must either cut your way through these masses of men like a cannon ball, or steal among them like a plague. Honesty is nothing to the purpose. Men bow before the power of genius; they hate it, and try to slander it, because genius does not divide the spoil; but if genius per-

a fancy to the first young, rich, and pretty woman you meet. They are all dodging the law, all at loggerheads with their husbands. If I were to begin to tell you all that vanity or necessity (virtue is not often mixed up in it, you may be sure), all that vanity and necessity drive them to do for lovers, finery, housekeeping, or children, I should never come to an end. So an honest man is the common enemy.

"But do you know what an honest man is? Here, in Paris, an honest man is the man who keeps his own counsel, and will not divide the plunder. I am not speaking now of those poor bond-slaves who do the work of the world without a reward for their toil—God Almighty's outcasts, I call them. Among them, I grant you, is virtue in all the flower of its stupidity, but poverty is no less their portion. At this moment, I think I see the long faces those good folk would pull if God played a practical joke on them and stayed away at the Last Judgment.

"Well, then, if you mean to make a fortune quickly, you must either be rich to begin with, or make people believe that you are rich. It is no use playing here except for high stakes; once take to low play, it is all up with you. If in the scores of professions that are open to you, there are ten men who rise very rapidly, people are sure to call them thieves. You can draw your own conclusions. Such is life. It is no cleaner than a kitchen; it reeks like a kitchen; and if you mean to cook your dinner, you must expect to soil your hands; the real art is in getting them clean again, and therein lies the whole morality of our epoch. If I take this tone in speaking of the world to you, I have the right to do so; I know it well. Do you think that I am blaming it? Far from it; the world has always been as it is now. Moralists' strictures will never change it. Mankind are not perfect, but one age is more or less hypocritical than another, and then simpletons say that its morality is high or low. I do not think that the rich are any worse than the poor; man is much the same, high or low, or wherever he is. In a million of these human cattle there may be half a score of bold spirits who rise above the

rest, above the laws; I am one of them. And you, if you are cleverer than your fellows, make straight to your end, and hold your head high. But you must lay your account with envy and slander and mediocrity, and every man's hand will be against you. Napoleon met with a Minister of War, Aubry by name, who all but sent him to the colonies.

"Feel your pulse. Think whether you can get up morning after morning, strengthened in yesterday's purpose. In that case I will make you an offer that no one would decline. Listen attentively. You see, I have an idea of my own. My idea is to live a patriarchal life on a vast estate, say a hundred thousand acres, somewhere in the Southern States of America. I mean to be a planter, to have slaves, to make a few snug millions by selling my cattle, timber, and tobacco; I want to live an absolute monarch, and to do just as I please; to lead such a life as no one here in these squalid dens of lath and plaster ever imagines. I am a great poet; I do not write my poems, I feel them, and act them. At this moment I have fifty thousand francs, which might possibly buy forty

every day in Paris, and by young men of the highest fashion. When a young wife has given her heart, she will not refuse her purse. Perhaps you are thinking that you will lose the money for good? Not you. You will make two hundred thousand francs again by some stroke of business. With your capital and your brains you should be able to accumulate as large a fortune as you could wish. *Ergo,* in six months you will have made your own fortune, and your old friend Vautrin's, and made an amiable woman very happy, to say nothing of your people at home, who must blow on their fingers to warm them, in the winter, for lack of firewood. You need not be surprised at my proposal, nor at the demand I make. Forty-seven out of every sixty great matches here in Paris are made after just such a bargain as this. The Chamber of Notaries compels my gentleman to——"

"What must I do?" said Rastignac, eagerly interrupting Vautrin's speech.

"Next to nothing," returned the other, with a slight involuntary movement, the suppressed exultation of the angler when he feels a bite at the end of his line. "Follow me carefully! The heart of a girl whose life is wretched and unhappy is a sponge that will thirstily absorb love; a dry sponge that swells at the first drop of sentiment. If you pay court to a young girl whose existence is a compound of loneliness, despair, and poverty, and who has no suspicion that she will come into a fortune, good Lord! it is quint and quatorze at piquet; it is knowing the numbers of the lottery beforehand; it is speculating in the funds when you have news from a sure source; it is building up a marriage on an indestructible foundation. The girl may come in for millions, and she will fling them, as if they were so many pebbles, at your feet. 'Take it, my beloved! Take it, Alfred, Adolphe, Eugène!' or whoever it was that showed his sense by sacrificing himself for her. And as for sacrificing himself, this is how I understand it. You sell a coat that is getting shabby, so that you can take her to the *Cadran bleu,* treat her to mushrooms on toast, and then go to the Ambigu-

Comique in the evening; you pawn your watch to buy her a shawl. I need not remind you of the fiddle-faddle sentimentality that goes down so well with all women; you spill a few drops of water on your stationery, for instance; those are the tears you shed while far away from her. You look to me as if you were perfectly acquainted with the argot of the heart. Paris, you see, is like a forest in the New World, where you have to deal with a score of varieties of savages—Illinois and Hurons, who live on the proceeds of their social hunting. You are a hunter of millions; you set your snares; you use lures and nets; there are many ways of hunting. Some hunt heiresses, others a legacy; some fish for souls, yet others sell their clients, bound hand and foot. Every one who comes back from the chase with his game-bag well filled meets with a warm welcome in good society. In justice to this hospitable part of the world, it must be said that you have to do with the most easy and good-natured of great cities. If the proud aristocracies of the rest of Europe refuse admittance among their ranks to a disreputable million-

like to see injustice of this sort. I am like Don Quixote, I have a fancy for defending the weak against the strong. If it should please God to take that youth away from him, Taillefer would have only his daughter left; he would want to leave his money to some one or other; an absurd notion, but it is only human nature, and he is not likely to have any more children, as I know. Victorine is gentle and amiable; she will soon twist her father round her fingers, and set his head spinning like a German top by plying him with sentiment! She will be too much touched by your devotion to forget you; you will marry her. I mean to play Providence for you, and Providence is to do my will. I have a friend whom I have attached closely to myself, a colonel in the Army of the Loire, who has just been transferred into the *garde royale*. He has taken my advice and turned ultra-royalist; he is not one of those fools who never change their opinions. Of all pieces of advice, my cherub, I would give you this—don't stick to your opinions any more than to your words. If any one asks you for them, let him have them—at a price. A man who prides himself on going in a straight line through life is an idiot who believes in infallibility. There are no such things as principles; there are only events, and there are no laws but those of expediency: a man of talent accepts events and the circumstances in which he finds himself, and turns everything to his own ends. If laws and principles were fixed and invariable, nations would not change them as readily as we change our shirts. The individual is not obliged to be more particular than the nation. A man whose services to France have been of the very slightest is a fetich looked on with superstitious awe because he has always seen everything in red; but he is good, at the most, to be put into the Museum of Arts and Crafts, among the automatic machines, and labeled La Fayette; while the prince at whom everybody flings a stone, the man who despises humanity so much that he spits as many oaths as he is asked for in the face of humanity, saved France from being torn in pieces at the Congress of Vienna; and they who should have

given him laurels fling mud at him. Oh! I know something of affairs, I can tell you; I have the secrets of many men! Enough. When I find three minds in agreement as to the application of a principle, I shall have a fixed and immovable opinion—I shall have to wait a long while first. In the Tribunals you will not find three judges of the same opinion on a single point of law. To return to the man I was telling you of. He would crucify Jesus Christ again, if I bade him. At a word from his old chum Vautrin he will pick a quarrel with a scamp that will not send so much as five francs to his sister, poor girl, and" (here Vautrin rose to his feet and stood like a fencing-master about to lunge)—"turn him off into the dark!" he added.

"How frightful!" said Eugène. "You do not really mean it? M. Vautrin, you are joking!"

"There! there! Keep cool!" said the other. "Don't behave like a baby. But if you find any amusement in it, be indignant, flare up! Say that I am a scoundrel, a rascal, a rogue, a bandit; but do not call me a blackleg nor a spy!

banknote for a thousand francs, with aggravating circumstances, is condemned to penal servitude? Those are your laws. Not a single provision but lands you in some absurdity. That man with yellow gloves and a golden tongue commits many a murder; he sheds no blood, but he drains his victim's veins as surely; a desperado forces open a door with a crowbar, dark deeds both of them! You yourself will do every one of the things that I suggest to you to-day, bar the bloodshed. Do you believe that there is any absolute standard in this world? Despise mankind and find out the meshes that you can slip through in the net of the Code. The secret of a great success for which you are at a loss to account is a crime that has never been found out, because it was properly executed."

"Silence, sir! I will not hear any more; you make me doubt myself. At this moment my sentiments are all my science."

"Just as you please, my fine fellow; I did not think you were so weak-minded," said Vautrin, "I shall say no more about it. One last word, however," and he looked hard at the student—"you have my secret," he said.

"A young man who refuses your offer knows that he must forget it."

"Quite right, quite right; I am glad to hear you say so. Somebody else might not be so scrupulous, you see. Keep in mind what I want to do for you. I will give you a fortnight. The offer is still open."

"What a head of iron the man has!" said Eugène to himself, as he watched Vautrin walk unconcernedly away with his cane under his arm. "Yet Mme. de Beauséant said as much more gracefully; he has only stated the case in cruder language. He would tear my heart with claws of steel. What made me think of going to Mme. de Nucingen? He guessed my motives before I knew them myself. To sum it up, that outlaw has told me more about virtue than all I have learned from men and books. If virtue admits of no compromises, I have certainly robbed my sisters," he said, throwing down the bags on the table.

He sat down again and fell, unconscious of his surroundings, into deep thought.

"To be faithful to an ideal of virtue! A heroic martyrdom! *Pshaw!* every one believes in virtue, but who is virtuous? Nations have made an idol of Liberty, but what nation on the face of the earth is free? My youth is still like a blue and cloudless sky. If I set myself to obtain wealth or power, does it mean that I must make up my mind to lie, and fawn, and cringe, and swagger, and flatter, and dissemble? To consent to be the servant of others who have likewise fawned, and lied, and flattered? Must I cringe to them before I can hope to be their accomplice? Well, then, I decline. I mean to work nobly and with a single heart. I will work day and night; I will owe my fortune to nothing but my own exertions. It may be the slowest of all roads to success, but I shall lay my head on the pillow at night untroubled by evil thoughts. Is there a greater or a better thing than this—to look back over your life and know that it is stainless as a lily? I and my life are like a young man and

"How did you find that out, my good Goriot?" said Eugène, putting a chair by the fire for his visitor.

"Her maid told me. I hear all about their doings from Thérèse and Constance," he added gleefully.

The old man looked like a lover who is still young enough to be made happy by the discovery of some little stratagem which brings him information of his lady-love without her knowledge.

"*You* will see them both!" he said, giving artless expression to a pang of jealousy.

"I do not know," answered Eugène. "I will go to Mme. de Beauséant and ask her for an introduction to the Maréchale."

Eugène felt a thrill of pleasure at the thought of appearing before the Vicomtesse, dressed as henceforward he always meant to be. The "abysses of the human heart," in the moralists' phrase, are only insidious thoughts, involuntary promptings of personal interest. The instinct of enjoyment turns the scale; those rapid changes of purpose which have furnished the text for so much rhetoric are calculations prompted by the hope of pleasure. Rastignac beholding himself well dressed and impeccable as to gloves and boots, forgot his virtuous resolutions. Youth, moreover, when bent upon wrongdoing does not dare to behold himself in the mirror of consciousness; mature age has seen itself; and therein lies the whole difference between these two phases of life.

A friendship between Eugène and his neighbor, Father Goriot, had been growing up for several days past. This secret friendship and the antipathy that the student had begun to entertain for Vautrin arose from the same psychological causes. The bold philosopher who shall investigate the effects of mental action upon the physical world will doubtless find more than one proof of the material nature of our sentiments in the relations which they create between human beings and other animals. What physiognomist is as quick to discern character as a dog is to discover from a stranger's face whether this is a friend or no? Those by-words—"atoms," "affinities"—are facts surviving in modern languages for the

confusion of philosophic wiseacres who amuse themselves by winnowing the chaff of language to find its grammatical roots. We *feel* that we are loved. Our sentiments make themselves felt in everything, even at a great distance. A letter is a living soul, and so faithful an echo of the voice that speaks in it, that finer natures look upon a letter as one of love's most precious treasures. Father Goriot's affection was of the instinctive order, a canine affection raised to a sublime pitch; he had scented compassion in the air, and the kindly respect and youthful sympathy in the student's heart. This friendship had, however, scarcely reached the stage at which confidences are made. Though Eugène had spoken of his wish to meet Mme. de Nucingen, it was not because he counted on the old man to introduce him to her house, for he hoped that his own audacity might stand him in good stead. All that Father Goriot had said as yet about his daughters had referred to the remarks that the student had made so freely in public on that day of the two visits.

"How could you think that Mme. de Restaud bore you a

"Are they not my own flesh and blood? I love the very horses that draw them; I envy the little lap-dog on their knees. Their happiness is my life. Every one loves after his own fashion, and mine does no one any harm; why should people trouble their heads about me? I am happy in my own way. Is there any law against going to see my girls in the evening when they are going out to a ball? And what a disappointment it is when I get there too late, and am told that 'Madame has gone out!' Once I waited till three o'clock in the morning for Nasie; I had not seen her for two whole days. I was so pleased, that it was almost too much for me! Please do not speak of me unless it is to say how good my daughters are to me. They are always wanting to heap presents upon me, but I will not have it. 'Just keep your money,' I tell them. 'What should I do with it? I want nothing.' And what am I, sir, after all? An old carcase, whose soul is always where my daughters are. When you have seen Mme. de Nucingen, tell me which you like the most," said the old man after a moment's pause, while Eugène put the last touches to his toilette. The student was about to go out to walk in the Garden of the Tuileries until the hour when he could venture to appear in Mme. de Beauséant's drawing-room.

That walk was a turning-point in Eugène's career. Several women noticed him; he looked so handsome, so young, and so well dressed. This almost admiring attention gave a new turn to his thoughts. He forgot his sisters and the aunt who had robbed herself for him; he no longer remembered his own virtuous scruples. He had seen hovering above his head the fiend so easy to mistake for an angel, the Devil with rainbow wings, who scatters rubies, and aims his golden shafts at palace fronts, who invests women with purple, and thrones with a glory that dazzles the eyes of fools till they forget the simple origins of royal dominion; he had heard the rustle of that Vanity whose tinsel seems to us to be the symbol of power. However cynical Vautrin's words had been, they had made an impression on his mind, as the sordid features of the

old crone who whispers, "A lover, and gold in torrents," remain engraven on a young girl's memory.

Eugène lounged about the walks till it was nearly five o'clock, then he went to Mme. de Beauséant, and received one of the terrible blows against which young hearts are defenceless. Hitherto the Vicomtesse had received him with the kindly urbanity, the bland grace of manner that is the result of fine breeding, but is only complete when it comes from the heart.

To-day Mme. de Beauséant bowed constrainedly, and spoke curtly:

"M. de Rastignac, I cannot possibly see you, at least not at this moment. I am engaged . . ."

An observer, and Rastignac instantly became an observer, could read the whole history, the character and customs of caste, in the phrase, in the tones of her voice, in her glance and bearing. He caught a glimpse of the iron hand beneath the velvet glove—the personality, the egoism beneath the manner, the wood beneath the varnish. In short, he heard that un-

fused by the harsh way in which she had spoken, for this lady was as genuinely kind-hearted as she was high-born.

Eugène was touched by this sudden relenting, but none the less he said to himself as he went away, "Crawl in the dust, put up with every kind of treatment. What must the rest of the world be like when one of the kindest of women forgets all her promises of befriending me in a moment, and tosses me aside like an old shoe? So it is every one for himself? It is true that her house is not a shop, and I have put myself in the wrong by needing her help. You should cut your way through the world like a cannon ball, as Vautrin said."

But the student's bitter thoughts were soon dissipated by the pleasure which he promised himself in this dinner with the Vicomtesse. Fate seemed to determine that the smallest accidents in his life should combine to urge him into a career, which the terrible sphinx of the Maison Vauquer had described as a field of battle where you must either slay or be slain, and cheat to avoid being cheated. You leave your conscience and your heart at the barriers, and wear a mask on entering into this game of grim earnest, where, as in ancient Sparta, you must snatch your prize without being detected if you would deserve the crown.

On his return he found the Vicomtesse gracious and kindly, as she had always been to him. They went together to the dining-room, where the Vicomte was waiting for his wife. In the time of the Restoration the luxury of the table was carried, as is well known, to the highest degree, and M. de Beauséant, like many jaded men of the world, had few pleasures left but those of good cheer; in this matter, in fact, he was a gourmand of the schools of Louis XVIII. and of the Duc d'Escars, and luxury was supplemented by splendor. Eugène, dining for the first time in a house where the traditions of grandeur had descended through many generations, had never seen any spectacle like this that now met his eyes. In the time of the Empire, balls had always ended with a supper, because the officers who took part in them must be fortified

for immediate service, and even in Paris might be called upon to leave the ballroom for the battlefield. This arrangement had gone out of fashion under the Monarchy, and Eugène had so far only been asked to dances. The self-possession which pre-eminently distinguished him in later life already stood him in good stead, and he did not betray his amazement. Yet as he saw for the first time the finely wrought silver plate, the completeness of every detail, the sumptuous dinner, noiselessly served, it was difficult for such an ardent imagination not to prefer this life of studied and refined luxury to the hardships of the life which he had chosen only that morning.

His thoughts went back for a moment to the lodging-house, and with a feeling of profound loathing, he vowed to himself that at New Year he would go; prompted at least as much by a desire to live among cleaner surroundings as by a wish to shake off Vautrin, whose huge hand he seemed to feel on his shoulder at that moment. When you consider the numberless forms, clamorous or mute, that corruption takes in Paris, com-

"You cannot doubt that I should obey you with pleasure," he answered, and there was a sarcastic tinge in his politeness which Eugène did not detect, "but I ought to go to meet some one at the Variétés."

"His mistress," said she to herself.

"Then, is not Ajuda coming for you this evening?" inquired the Vicomte.

"No," she answered, petulantly.

"Very well, then, if you really must have an arm, take that of M. de Rastignac."

The Vicomtesse turned to Eugène with a smile.

"That would be a very compromising step for you," she said.

" 'A Frenchman loves danger, because in danger there is glory,' to quote M. de Chateaubriand," said Rastignac, with a bow.

A few moments later he was sitting beside Mme. de Beauséant in a brougham, that whirled them through the streets of Paris to a fashionable theatre. It seemed to him that some fairy magic had suddenly transported him into a box facing the stage. All the lorgnettes of the house were pointed at him as he entered, and at the Vicomtesse in her charming toilette. He went from enchantment to enchantment.

"You must talk to me, you know," said Mme. de Beauséant. "Ah! look! There is Mme. de Nucingen in the third box from ours. Her sister and M. de Trailles are on the other side."

The Vicomtesse glanced as she spoke at the box where Mlle. de Rochefide should have been; M. d'Ajuda was not there, and Mme. de Beauséant's face lighted up in a marvelous way.

"She is charming," said Eugène, after looking at Mme. de Nucingen.

"She has white eyelashes."

"Yes, but she has such a pretty slender figure!"

"Her hands are large."

"Such beautiful eyes!"

"Her face is long."

"Yes, but length gives distinction."

"It is lucky for her that she has some distinction in her face. Just see how she fidgets with her opera-glass! The Goriot blood shows itself in every movement," said the Vicomtesse, much to Eugène's astonishment.

Indeed, Mme. de Beauséant seemed to be engaged in making a survey of the house, and to be unconscious of Mme. Nucingen's existence; but no movement made by the latter was lost upon the Vicomtesse. The house was full of the loveliest women in Paris, so that Delphine de Nucingen was not a little flattered to receive the undivided attention of Mme. de Beauséant's young, handsome, and well-dressed cousin, who seemed to have no eyes for any one else.

"If you look at her so persistently, you will make people talk, M. de Rastignac. You will never succeed if you fling yourself at any one's head like that."

"My dear cousin," said Eugène, "you have protected me indeed so far, and now if you would complete your work, I only ask of you a favor which will cost you but little, and be

"Then, what would you do yourself in such a case?"

"I should suffer in silence."

At this point the Marquis d'Ajuda appeared in Mme. de Beauséant's box.

"I have made a muddle of my affairs to come to you," he said, "and I am telling you about it, so that it may not be a sacrifice."

Eugène saw the glow of joy on the Vicomtesse's face, and knew that this was love, and learned the difference between love and the affectations of Parisian coquetry. He admired his cousin, grew mute, and yielded his place to M. d'Ajuda with a sigh.

"How noble, how sublime a woman is when she loves like that!" he said to himself. "And *he* could forsake her for a doll! Oh! how could any one forsake her?"

There was a boy's passionate indignation in his heart. He could have flung himself at Mme. de Beauséant's feet; he longed for the power of the devil if he could snatch her away and hide her in his heart, as an eagle snatches up some white yeanling from the plains and bears it to its eyrie. It was humiliating to him to think that in all this gallery of fair pictures he had not one picture of his own. "To have a mistress and an almost royal position is a sign of power," he said to himself. And he looked at Mme. de Nucingen as a man measures another who has insulted him.

The Vicomtesse turned to him, and the expression of her eyes thanked him a thousand times for his discretion. The first act came to an end just then.

"Do you know Mme. de Nucingen well enough to present M. de Rastignac to her?" she asked of the Marquis d'Ajuda.

"She will be delighted," said the Marquis. The handsome Portuguese rose as he spoke and took the student's arm, and in another moment Eugène found himself in Mme. de Nucingen's box.

"Madame," said the Marquis, "I have the honor of presenting to you the Chevalier Eugène de Rastignac; he is a cousin of Mme de Beauséant's. You have made so deep an

impression upon him, that I thought I would fill up the measure of his happiness by bringing him nearer to his divinity."

Words spoken half jestingly to cover their somewhat disrespectful import; but such an implication, if carefully disguised, never gives offence to a woman. Mme. de Nucingen smiled, and offered Eugène the place which her husband had just left.

"I do not venture to suggest that you should stay with me, monsieur," she said. "Those who are so fortunate as to be in Mme. de Beauséant's company do not desire to leave it."

"Madame," Eugène said, lowering his voice, "I think that to please my cousin I should remain with you. Before my lord Marquis came we were speaking of you and of your exceedingly distinguished appearance," he added aloud.

M. d'Ajuda turned and left them.

"Are you really going to stay with me, monsieur?" asked the Baroness. "Then we shall make each other's acquaintance. Mme. de Restaud told me about you, and has made

morning for two hours. So this evening I was quite full of all that your father had told me, and while I was dining with my cousin I said that you could not be as beautiful as affectionate. Mme. de Beauséant meant to gratify such warm admiration, I think, when she brought me here, telling me, in her gracious way, that I should see you."

"Then, even now, I owe you a debt of gratitude, monsieur," said the banker's wife. "We shall be quite old friends in a little while."

"Although a friendship with you could not be like an ordinary friendship," said Rastignac; "I should never wish to be your friend."

Such stereotyped phrases as these, in the mouths of beginners, possess an unfailing charm for women, and are insipid only when read coldly; for a young man's tone, glance, and attitude give a surpassing eloquence to the banal phrases. Mme. de Nucingen thought that Rastignac was adorable. Then, woman-like, being at a loss how to reply to the student's outspoken admiration, she answered a previous remark.

"Yes, it is very wrong of my sister to treat our poor father as she does," she said; "he has been a Providence to us. It was not until M. de Nucingen positively ordered me only to receive him in the mornings that I yielded the point. But I have been unhappy about it for a long while; I have shed many tears over it. This violence to my feelings, with my husband's brutal treatment, have been the two causes of my unhappy married life. There is certainly no woman in Paris whose lot seems more enviable than mine, and yet, in reality, there is not one so much to be pitied. You will think I must be out of my senses to talk to you like this; but you know my father, and I cannot regard you as a stranger."

"You will find no one," said Eugène, "who longs as eagerly as I do to be yours. What do all women seek? Happiness." (He answered his own question in low, vibrating tones.) "And if happiness for a woman means that she is to be loved and adored, to have a friend to whom she can pour out her wishes, her fancies, her sorrows and joys; to whom she can lay

bare her heart and soul, and all her fair defects and her gracious virtues, without fear of a betrayal; believe me, the devotion and the warmth that never fails can only be found in the heart of a young man who, at a bare sign from you, would go to his death, who neither knows nor cares to know anything as yet of the world, because you will be all the world to him. I myself, you see (you will laugh at my simplicity), have just come from a remote country district; I am quite new to this world of Paris; I have only known true and loving hearts; and I made up my mind that here I should find no love. Then I chanced to meet my cousin, and to see my cousin's heart from very near; I have divined the inexhaustible treasures of passion, and, like Cherubino, I am the lover of all women, until the day comes when I find *the* woman to whom I may devote myself. As soon as I saw you, as soon as I came into the theatre this evening, I felt myself borne towards you as if by the current of a stream. I had so often thought of you already, but I had never dreamed that you would be so beautiful! Mme. de Beauséant told me that I

"My affairs seem to be in a promising way," said Eugène to himself.—" 'Can you love me?' I asked her, and she did not resent it. The bit is in the horse's mouth, and I have only to mount and ride;" and with that he went to pay his respects to Mme. de Beauséant, who was leaving the theatre on d'Ajuda's arm.

The student did not know that the Baroness' thoughts had been wandering; that she was even then expecting a letter from de Marsay, one of those letters that bring about a rupture that rends the soul; so, happy in his delusion, Eugène went with the Vicomtesse to the peristyle, where people were waiting till their carriages were announced.

"That cousin of yours is hardly recognizable for the same man," said the Portuguese laughingly to the Vicomtesse, when Eugène had taken leave of them. "He will break the bank. He is as supple as an eel; he will go a long way, of that I am sure. Who else could have picked out a woman for him, as you did, just when she needed consolation?"

"But it is not certain that she does not still love the faithless lover," said Mme. de Beauséant.

The student meanwhile walked back from the Théâtre-Italien to the Rue Neuve-Sainte-Geneviève, making the most delightful plans as he went. He had noticed how closely Mme. de Restaud had scrutinized him when he appeared in the Vicomtesse's box, and again when he sat beside Mme. de Nucingen, and inferred that the Countess' doors would not be closed in future. Four important houses were now open to him —for he meant to stand well with the Maréchale; he had four supporters in the inmost circle of society in Paris. Even now it was clear to him that, once involved in this intricate social machinery, he must attach himself to a spoke of the wheel that was to turn and raise his fortunes; he would not examine himself too curiously as to the methods, but he was certain of the end, and conscious of the power to gain and keep his hold.

"If Mme. de Nucingen takes an interest in me, I will teach her how to manage her husband. That husband of hers is a

great speculator; he might put me in the way of making a fortune by a single stroke."

He did not say this bluntly in so many words; as yet, indeed, he was not sufficient of a diplomatist to sum up a situation, to see its possibilities at a glance, and calculate the chances in his favor. These were nothing but hazy ideas that floated over his mental horizon; they were less cynical than Vautrin's notions; but if they had been tried in the crucible of conscience, no very pure result would have issued from the test. It is by a succession of such like transactions that men sink at last to the level of the relaxed morality of this epoch, when there have never been so few of those who square their courses with their theories, so few of those noble characters who do not yield to temptation, for whom the slightest deviation from the line of rectitude is a crime. To these magnificent types of uncompromising Right we owe two masterpieces —the Alceste of Molière, and, in our own day, the characters of Jeanie Deans and her father in Sir Walter Scott's novel. Perhaps a work which should chronicle the opposite course,

old man left his bed, unlocked the door, and promptly returned again.

It was the first time that Eugène had been in Father Goriot's room, and he could not control his feeling of amazement at the contrast between the den in which the father lived and the costume of the daughter whom he had just beheld. The window was curtainless, the walls were damp, in places the varnished wall-paper had come away and gave glimpses of the grimy yellow plaster beneath. The wretched bed on which the old man lay boasted but one thin blanket, and a wadded quilt made out of large pieces of Mme. Vauquer's old dresses. The floor was damp and gritty. Opposite the window stood a chest of drawers made of rosewood, one of the old-fashioned kind with a curving front and brass handles, shaped like rings of twisted vine stems covered with flowers and leaves. On a venerable piece of furniture with a wooden shelf stood a ewer and basin and shaving apparatus. A pair of shoes stood in one corner; a night-table by the bed had neither a door nor marble slab. There was not a trace of a fire in the empty grate; the square walnut table with the cross-bar against which Father Goriot had crushed and twisted his posset-dish stood near the hearth. The old man's hat was lying on a broken-down bureau. An armchair stuffed with straw and a couple of chairs completed the list of ramshackle furniture. From the tester of the bed, tied to the ceiling by a piece of rag, hung a strip of some cheap material in large red and black checks. No poor drudge in a garret could be worse lodged than Father Goriot in Mme. Vauquer's lodging-house. The mere sight of the room sent a chill through you and a sense of oppression; it was like the worst cell in a prison. Luckily, Goriot could not see the effect that his surroundings produced on Eugène as the latter deposited his candle on the night-table. The old man turned round, keeping the bedclothes huddled up to his chin.

"Well," he said, "and which do you like the best, Mme. de Restaud or Mme. de Nucingen?"

"I like Mme. Delphine the best," said the law student, "because she loves you the best."

At the words so heartily spoken the old man's hand slipped out from under the bedclothes and grasped Eugène's.

"Thank you, thank you," he said, gratefully. "Then what did she say about me?"

The student repeated the Baroness' remarks with some embellishments of his own, the old man listening the while as though he heard a voice from Heaven.

"Dear child!" he said. "Yes, yes, she is very fond of me. But you must not believe all that she tells you about Anastasie. The two sisters are jealous of each other, you see, another proof of their affection. Mme. de Restaud is very fond of me too. I know she is. A father sees his children as God sees all of us; he looks into the very depths of their hearts; he knows their intentions; and both of them are so loving. Oh! if I only had good sons-in-law, I should be too happy, and I dare say there is no perfect happiness here below. If I might live with them—simply hear their voices, know that they are there, see them go and come as I used to do at home when they were still with me; why, my heart bounds at the

closely to them that you seem to feel every movement that they make. Everywhere I hear their voices sounding in my ears. If they are sad, the look in their eyes freezes my blood. Some day you will find out that there is far more happiness in another's happiness than in your own. It is something that I cannot explain, something within that sends a glow of warmth all through you. In short, I live my life three times over. Shall I tell you something funny? Well, then, since I have been a father, I have come to understand God. He is everywhere in the world, because the whole world comes from Him. And it is just the same with my children, monsieur. Only, I love my daughters better than God loves the world, for the world is not so beautiful as God Himself is, but my children are more beautiful than I am. Their lives are so bound up with mine that I felt somehow that you would see them this evening. Great Heaven! If any man would make my little Delphine as happy as a wife is when she is loved, I would black his boots and run on his errands. That miserable M. de Marsay is a cur; I know all about him from her maid. A longing to wring his neck comes over me now and then. He does not love her! does not love a pearl of a woman, with a voice like a nightingale and shaped like a model. Where can her eyes have been when she married that great lump of an Alsatian? They ought both of them to have married young men, good-looking and good-tempered—but, after all, they had their own way."

Father Goriot was sublime. Eugène had never yet seen his face light up as it did now with the passionate fervor of a father's love. It is worthy of remark that strong feeling has a very subtle and pervasive power; the roughest nature, in the endeavor to express a deep and sincere affection, communicates to others the influence that has put resonance into the voice, and eloquence into every gesture, wrought a change in the very features of the speaker; for under the inspiration of passion the stupidest human being attains to the highest eloquence of ideas, if not of language, and seems to move in some sphere of light. In the old man's tones and gesture

there was something just then of the same spell that a great actor exerts over his audience. But does not the poet in us find expression in our affections?

"Well," said Eugène, "perhaps you will not be sorry to hear that she is pretty sure to break with de Marsay before long. That sprig of fashion has left her for the Princesse Galathionne. For my part, I fell in love with Mme. Delphine this evening."

"Stuff!" said Father Goriot.

"I did indeed, and she did not regard me with aversion. For a whole hour we talked of love, and I am to go to call on her on Saturday, the day after to-morrow."

"Oh! how I should love you, if she should like you. You are kind-hearted; you would never make her miserable. If you were to forsake her, I would cut your throat at once. A woman does not love twice, you see! Good heavens! what nonsense I am talking, M. Eugène! It is cold; you ought not to stay here. *Mon Dieu!* so you have heard her speak? What message did she give you for me?"

thought that he should find a warmer welcome for himself if the Baroness should care for Eugène. Moreover, he had confided one of his troubles to the younger man. Mme. de Nucingen, for whose happiness he prayed a thousand times daily, had never known the joys of love. Eugène was certainly (to make use of his own expression) one of the nicest young men that he had ever seen, and some prophetic instinct seemed to tell him that Eugène was to give her the happiness which had not been hers. These were the beginnings of a friendship that grew up between the old man and his neighbor; but for this friendship the catastrophe of the drama must have remained a mystery.

The affection with which Father Goriot regarded Eugène, by whom he seated himself at breakfast, the change in Goriot's face, which, as a rule, looked as expressionless as a plaster cast, and a few words that passed between the two, surprised the other lodgers. Vautrin, who saw Eugène for the first time since their interview, seemed as if he would fain read the student's very soul. During the night Eugène had had some time in which to scan the vast field which lay before him; and now, as he remembered yesterday's proposal, the thought of Mlle. Taillefer's dowry came, of course, to his mind, and he could not help thinking of Victorine as the most exemplary youth may think of an heiress. It chanced that their eyes met. The poor girl did not fail to see that Eugène looked very handsome in his new clothes. So much was said in the glance, thus exchanged, that Eugène could not doubt but that he was associated in her mind with the vague hopes that lie dormant in a girl's heart and gather round the first attractive newcomer. "Eight hundred thousand francs!" a voice cried in his ears, but suddenly he took refuge in the memories of yesterday evening, thinking that his extemporized passion for Mme. de Nucingen was a talisman that would preserve him from this temptation.

"They gave Rossini's *Barber of Seville* at the Italiens yesterday evening," he remarked. "I never heard such delicious music. Good gracious! how lucky people are to have a box at the Italiens!"

Father Goriot drank in every word that Eugène let fall, and watched him as a dog watches his master's slightest movement.

"You men are like fighting cocks," said Mme. Vauquer; "you do what you like."

"How did you get back?" inquired Vautrin.

"I walked," answered Eugène.

"For my own part," remarked the tempter, "I do not care about doing things by halves. If I want to enjoy myself that way, I should prefer to go in my carriage, sit in my own box, and do the thing comfortably. Everything or nothing; that is my motto."

"And a good one, too," commented Mme. Vauquer.

"Perhaps you will see Mme. de Nucingen to-day," said Eugène, addressing Goriot in an undertone. "She will welcome you with open arms, I am sure; she would want to ask you for all sorts of little details about me. I have found out that she would do anything in the world to be known by my cousin Mme. de Beauséant; don't forget to tell her that I love

"Yes."

"Do you remember that he asks the reader somewhere what he would do if he could make a fortune by killing an old mandarin somewhere in China by mere force of wishing it, and without stirring from Paris?"

"Yes."

"Well, then?"

"Pshaw! I am at my thirty-third mandarin."

"Seriously, though. Look here, suppose you were sure that you could do it, and had only to give a nod. Would you do it."

"Is he well stricken in years, this mandarin of yours? Pshaw! after all, young or old, paralytic, or well and sound, my word for it. . . . Well, then. Hang it, no!"

"You are a good fellow, Bianchon. But suppose you loved a woman well enough to lose your soul in hell for her, and that she wanted money, lots of money for dresses and a carriage, and all her whims, in fact?"

"Why, here you are taking away my reason, and want me to reason!"

"Well, then, Bianchon, I am mad; bring me to my senses. I have two sisters as beautiful and innocent as angels, and I want them to be happy. How am I to find two hundred thousand francs apiece for them in the next five years? Now and then in life, you see, you must play for heavy stakes, and it is no use wasting your luck on low play."

"But you are only stating the problem that lies before every one at the outset of his life, and you want to cut the Gordian knot with a sword. If that is the way of it, dear boy, you must be an Alexander, or to the hulks you go. For my own part, I am quite contented with the little lot I mean to make for myself somewhere in the country, when I mean to step into my father's shoes and plod along. A man's affections are just as fully satisfied by the smallest circle as they can be by a vast circumference. Napoleon himself could only dine once, and he could not have more mistresses than a house student at the Capuchins. Happiness, old man, depends on

what lies between the sole of your foot and the crown of your head; and whether it costs a million or a hundred louis, the actual amount of pleasure that you receive rests entirely with you, and is just exactly the same in any case. I am for letting that Chinaman live."

"Thank you, Bianchon; you have done me good. We will always be friends."

"I say," remarked the medical student, as they came to the end of a broad walk in the Jardin des Plantes, "I saw the Michonneau and Poiret a few minutes ago on a bench chatting with a gentleman whom I used to see in last year's troubles hanging about the Chamber of Deputies; he seems to me, in fact, to be a detective dressed up like a decent retired tradesman. Let us keep an eye on that couple; I will tell you why some time. Good-bye; it is nearly four o'clock, and I must be in to answer to my name."

When Eugène reached the lodging-house, he found Father Goriot waiting for him.

"Here," cried the old man, "here is a letter from her.

way," the student was thinking. "She wants to use me to bring back de Marsay; nothing but pique makes a woman do a thing like this."

"Well," said Father Goriot, "what are you thinking about?"

Eugène did not know the fever of vanity that possessed some women in those days; how should he imagine that to open a door in the Faubourg Saint-Germain a banker's wife would go to almost any length. For the coterie of the Faubourg Saint-Germain was a charmed circle, and the women who moved in it were at that time the queens of society; and among the greatest of these *Dames du Petit-Château,* as they were called, were Mme. de Beauséant and her friends the Duchesse de Langeais and the Duchesse de Maufrigneuse. Rastignac was alone in his ignorance of the frantic efforts made by women who lived in the Chaussée-d'Antin to enter this seventh heaven and shine among the brightest constellations of their sex. But his cautious disposition stood him in good stead, and kept his judgment cool, and the not altogether enviable power of imposing instead of accepting conditions.

"Yes, I am going," he replied.

So it was curiosity that drew him to Mme. de Nucingen; while, if she had treated him disdainfully, passion perhaps might have brought him to her feet. Still he waited almost impatiently for to-morrow, and the hour when he could go to her. There is almost as much charm for a young man in a first flirtation as there is in first love. The certainty of success is a source of happiness to which men do not confess, and all the charm of certain women lies in this. The desire of conquest springs no less from the easiness than from the difficulty of triumph, and every passion is excited or sustained by one or other of these two motives which divide the empire of love. Perhaps this division is one result of the great question of temperaments; which, after all, dominates social life. The melancholic temperament may stand in need of the tonic of coquetry, while those of nervous or sanguine complexion

in the way, please tell me so frankly; I count on your good faith."

"No, stay with me," she said; "I shall be all alone if you go. Nucingen is dining in town, and I do not want to be alone; I want to be taken out of myself."

"But what is the matter?"

"You are the very last person whom I should tell," she exclaimed.

"Then I am connected in some way in this secret. I wonder what it is?"

"Perhaps. Yet, no," she went on; "it is a domestic quarrel, which ought to be buried in the depths of the heart. I am very unhappy; did I not tell you so the day before yesterday? Golden chains are the heaviest of all fetters."

When a woman tells a young man that she is very unhappy, and when the young man is clever, and well dressed, and has fifteen hundred francs lying idle in his pocket, he is sure to think as Eugène said, and he becomes a coxcomb.

"What can you have left to wish for?" he answered. "You

"Am I to your taste?"

TO NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

she said. "Your love for me as yet is only the conventional gallantry that men use to masquerade in; and, if you really loved me, you would be driven to despair. I must keep silence, you see. Let us talk of something else, for pity's sake," she added. "Let me show you my rooms."

"No; let us stay here," answered Eugène; he sat down on the sofa before the fire, and boldly took Mme. de Nucingen's hand in his. She surrendered it to him; he even felt the pressure of her fingers in one of the spasmodic clutches that betray terrible agitation.

"Listen," said Rastignac; "if you are in trouble, you ought to tell me about it. I want to prove to you that I love you for yourself alone. You must speak to me frankly about your troubles, so that I can put an end to them, even if I have to kill half-a-dozen men; or I shall go, never to return."

"Very well," she cried, putting her hand to her forehead in an agony of despair, "I will put you to the proof, and this very moment. Yes," she said to herself, "I have no other resource left."

She rang the bell.

"Are the horses put in for the master?" she asked of the servant.

"Yes, madame."

"I shall take his carriage myself. He can have mine and my horses. Serve dinner at seven o'clock."

"Now, come with me," she said to Eugène, who thought as he sat in the banker's carriage beside Mme. de Nucingen that he must surely be dreaming.

"To the Palais-Royal," she said to the coachman; "stop near the Théâtre-Français."

She seemed to be too troubled and excited to answer the innumerable questions that Eugène put to her. He was at a loss what to think of her mute resistance, her obstinate silence.

"Another moment and she will escape me," he said to himself.

When the carriage stopped at last, the Baroness gave the

law student a glance that silenced his wild words, for he was almost beside himself.

"Is it true that you love me?" she asked.

"Yes," he answered, and in his manner and tone there was no trace of the uneasiness that he felt.

"You will not think ill of me, will you, whatever I may ask of you?"

"No."

"Are you ready to do my bidding?"

"Blindly."

"Have you ever been to a gaming-house?" she asked in a tremulous voice.

"Never."

"Ah! now I can breathe. You will have luck. Here is my purse," she said. "Take it! there are a hundred francs in it, all that such a fortunate woman as I can call her own. Go up into one of the gaming-houses—I do not know where they are, but there are some near the Palais-Royal. Try your luck with the hundred francs at a game they call roulette; lose it

Eugène staked the whole of his money on the number 21 (his own age). There was a cry of surprise; before he knew what he had done, he had won.

"Take your money off, sir," said the old gentleman; "you don't often win twice running by that system."

Eugène took the rake that the old man handed to him, and drew in his three thousand six hundred francs, and, still perfectly ignorant of what he was about, staked again on the red. The bystanders watched him enviously as they saw him continue to play. The disc turned, and again he won; the banker threw him three thousand six hundred francs once more.

"You have seven thousand two hundred francs of your own," the old gentleman said in his ear. "Take my advice and go away with your winnings; red has turned up eight times already. If you are charitable, you will show your gratitude for sound counsel by giving a trifle to an old prefect of Napoleon who is down on his luck."

Rastignac's head was swimming; he saw ten of his louis pass into the white-haired man's possession, and went downstairs with his seven thousand francs; he was still ignorant of the game, and stupefied by his luck.

"So that is over; and now where will you take me?" he asked, as soon as the door was closed, and he showed the seven thousand francs to Mme. de Nucingen.

Delphine flung her arms about him, but there was no passion in that wild embrace.

"You have saved me!" she cried, and tears of joy flowed fast.

"I will tell you everything, my friend. For you will be my friend, will you not? I am rich, you think, very rich; I have everything I want, or I seem as if I had everything. Very well, you must know that M. de Nucingen does not allow me the control of a single penny; he pays all the bills for the house expenses; he pays for my carriages and opera box; he does not give me enough to pay for my dress, and he reduces me to poverty in secret on purpose. I am too

proud to beg from him. I should be the vilest of women if I could take his money at the price at which he offers it. Do you ask how I, with seven hundred thousand francs of my own, could let myself be robbed? It is because I was proud, and scorned to speak. We are so young, so artless when our married life begins! I never could bring myself to ask my husband for money; the words would have made my lips bleed, I did not dare to ask; I spent my savings first, and then the money that my poor father gave me, then I ran into debt. Marriage for me is a hideous farce; I cannot talk about it; let it suffice to say that Nucingen and I have separate rooms, and that I would fling myself out of the window sooner than consent to any other manner of life. I suffered agonies when I had to confess to my girlish extravagance, my debts for jewelry and trifles (for our poor father had never refused us anything, and spoiled us), but at last I found courage to tell him about them. After all, I had a fortune of my own. Nucingen flew into a rage; he said that I should be the ruin of him, and used frightful language! I wished

life? Who that believes in love foresees such an end to love? You swear to love us eternally; how, then, can our interests be separate?

"You do not know how I suffered to-day when Nucingen refused to give me six thousand francs; he spends as much as that every month on his mistress, an opera dancer! I thought of killing myself. The wildest thoughts came into my head. There have been moments in my life when I have envied my servants, and would have changed places with my maid. It was madness to think of going to our father, Anastasie and I have bled him dry; our poor father would have sold himself if he could have raised six thousand francs that way. I should have driven him frantic to no purpose. You have saved me from shame and death; I was beside myself with anguish. Ah! monsieur, I owed you this explanation after my mad ravings. When you left me just now, as soon as you were out of sight, I longed to escape, to run away . . . where, I did not know. Half the women in Paris lead such lives as mine; they live in apparent luxury, and in their souls are tormented by anxiety. I know of poor creatures even more miserable than I; there are women who are driven to ask their tradespeople to make out false bills, women who rob their husbands. Some men believe that an Indian shawl worth a hundred louis only cost five hundred francs, others that a shawl costing five hundred francs is worth a hundred louis. There are women, too, with narrow incomes, who scrape and save and starve their children to pay for a dress. I am innocent of these base meannesses. But this is the last extremity of my torture. Some women will sell themselves to their husbands, and so obtain their way, but I, at any rate, am free. If I chose, Nucingen would cover me with gold, but I would rather weep on the breast of a man whom I can respect. Ah! to-night, M. de Marsay will no longer have a right to think of me as a woman whom he has paid." She tried to conceal her tears from him, hiding her face in her hands; Eugène drew them away and looked at her; she seemed to him sublime at that moment.

"It is hideous, is it not," she cried, "to speak in a breath of money and affection. You cannot love me after this," she added.

The incongruity between the ideas of honor which make women so great, and the errors in conduct which are forced upon them by the constitution of society, had thrown Eugène's thoughts into confusion; he uttered soothing and consoling words, and wondered at the beautiful woman before him, and at the artless imprudence of her cry of pain.

"You will not remember this against me?" she asked; "promise me that you will not."

"Ah! madame, I am incapable of doing so," he said, She took his hand and held it to her heart, a movement full of grace that expressed her deep gratitude.

"I am free and happy once more, thanks to you," she said. "Oh! I have felt lately as if I were in the grasp of an iron hand. But after this I mean to live simply and to spend nothing. You will think me just as pretty, will you not, my friend? Keep this," she went on, as she took only six of

"Say nothing," Eugène answered her. "Put the bills in an envelope, direct it, and send it by your maid."

"Why, you are a love of a man," she said. "Ah! see what it is to have been well brought up. That is the Beauséant through and through," she went on, smiling at him.

"She is charming," thought Eugène, more and more in love. He looked round him at the room; there was an ostentatious character about the luxury, a meretricious taste in the splendor.

"Do you like it?" she asked, as she rang for the maid.

"Thérèse, take this to M. de Marsay, and give it into his hands yourself. If he is not at home, bring the letter back to me."

Thérèse went, but not before she had given Eugène a spiteful glance.

Dinner was announced. Rastignac gave his arm to Mme. de Nucingen, she led the way into a pretty dining-room, and again he saw the luxury of the table which he had admired in his cousin's house.

"Come and dine with me on opera evenings, and we will go to the Italiens afterwards," she said.

"I should soon grow used to the pleasant life if it could last, but I am a poor student, and I have my way to make."

"Oh! you will succeed," she said, laughing. "You will see. All that you wish will come to pass. *I* did not expect to be so happy."

It is the wont of women to prove the impossible by the possible, and to annihilate facts by presentiments. When Mme. de Nucingen and Rastignac took their places in her box at the Bouffons, her face wore a look of happiness that made her so lovely that every one indulged in those small slanders against which women are defenceless; for the scandal that is uttered lightly is often seriously believed. Those who know Paris, believe nothing that is said, and say nothing of what is done there.

Eugène took the Baroness' hand in his, and by some light pressure of the fingers, or a closer grasp of the hand, they

found a language in which to express the sensations which the music gave them. It was an evening of intoxicating delight for both; and when it ended, and they went out together, Mme. de Nucingen insisted on taking Eugène with her as far as the Pont Neuf, he disputing with her the whole of the way for a single kiss after all those that she had showered upon him so passionately at the Palais-Royal; Eugène reproached her with inconsistency.

"That was gratitude," she said, "for devotion that I did not dare to hope for, but now it would be a promise."

"And will you give me no promise, ingrate?"

He grew vexed. Then, with one of those impatient gestures that fill a lover with ecstasy, she gave him her hand to kiss, and he took it with a discontented air that delighted her.

"I shall see you at the ball on Monday," she said.

As Eugène went home in the moonlight, he fell to serious reflections. He was satisfied, and yet dissatisfied. He was pleased with an adventure which would probably give him

thirteen hundred livres a year! *Mon Dieu!* Poor little girl! why did she not come to me? I would have sold my *rentes;* she should have had some of the principal, and I would have bought a life-annuity with the rest. My good neighbor, why did not *you* come to tell me of her difficulty? How had you the heart to go and risk her poor little hundred francs at play? This is heart-breaking work. You see what it is to have sons-in-law. Oh! if I had hold of them, I would wring their necks. *Mon Dieu! crying!* Did you say she was crying?"

"With her head on my waistcoat," said Eugène.

"Oh! give it to me," said Father Goriot. "What! my daughter's tears have fallen there—my darling Delphine, who never used to cry when she was a little girl! Oh! I will buy you another; do not wear it again; let me have it. By the terms of her marriage-contract, she ought to have the use of her property. To-morrow morning I will go and see Derville; he is an attorney. I will demand that her money should be invested in her own name. I know the law. I am an old wolf; I will show my teeth."

"Here, father; this is a banknote for a thousand francs that she wanted me to keep out of our winnings. Keep them for her, in the pocket of the waistcoat."

Goriot looked hard at Eugène, reached out and took the law student's hand, and Eugène felt a tear fall on it.

"You will succeed," the old man said. "God is just, you see. I know an honest man when I see him, and I can tell you, there are not many men like you. I am to have another dear child in you, am I? There, go to sleep; you can sleep; you are not yet a father. She was crying! and I have to be told about it!—and I was quietly eating my dinner, like an idiot, all the time—I, who would sell the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to save one tear to either of them."

"An honest man!" said Eugène to himself as he lay down. "Upon my word, I think I will be an honest man all my life; it is so pleasant to obey the voice of conscience." Perhaps

none but believers in God do good in secret; and Eugène believed in a God.

The next day Rastignac went at the appointed time to Mme. de Beauséant, who took him with her to the Duchess de Carigliano's ball. The Maréchale received Eugène most graciously. Mme. de Nucingen was there. Delphine's dress seemed to suggest that she wished for the admiration of others, so that she might shine the more in Eugène's eyes; she was eagerly expecting a glance from him, hiding, as she thought, this eagerness from all beholders. This moment is full of charm for the one who can guess all that passes in a woman's mind. Who has not refrained from giving his opinion, to prolong her suspense, concealing his pleasure from a desire to tantalize, seeking a confession of love in her uneasiness, enjoying the fears that he can dissipate by a smile? In the course of the evening the law student suddenly comprehended his position; he saw that, as the cousin of Mme. de Beauséant, he was a personage in this world. He was already credited with the conquest of Mme. de Nucingen

success for the benefit of Father Goriot and the lodgers. Vautrin began to smile in a diabolical fashion.

"And do you suppose," cried that cold-blooded logician, "that a young man of fashion can live here in the Rue Neuve-Sainte-Geneviève, in the Maison Vauquer—an exceedingly respectable boarding-house in every way, I grant you, but an establishment that, none the less, falls short of being fashionable? The house is comfortable, it is lordly in its abundance; it is proud to be the temporary abode of a Rastignac; but, after all, it is in the Rue Neuve-Sainte-Geneviève, and luxury would be out of place here, where we only aim at the purely *patriarchalorama*. If you mean to cut a figure in Paris, my young friend," Vautrin continued, with half-paternal jocularity, "you must have three horses, a tilbury for the mornings, and a closed carriage for the evening; you should spend altogether about nine thousand francs on your stables. You would show yourself unworthy of your destiny if you spent no more than three thousand francs with your tailor, six hundred in perfumery, a hundred crowns to your shoemaker, and a hundred more to your hatter. As for your laundress, there goes another thousand francs; a young man of fashion must of necessity make a great point of his linen; if your linen comes up to the required standard, people often do not look any further. Love and the Church demand a fair altar-cloth. That is fourteen thousand francs. I am saying nothing of losses at play, bets, and presents; it is impossible to allow less than two thousand francs for pocket money. I have led that sort of life, and I know all about these expenses. Add the cost of necessaries next; three hundred louis for provender, a thousand francs for a place to roost in. Well, my boy, for all these little wants of ours we had need to have twenty-five thousand francs every year in our purse, or we shall find ourselves in the kennel, and people laughing at us, and our career is cut short, good-bye to success, and good-bye to your mistress! I am forgetting your valet and your groom! Is Christophe going to carry your *billets-doux* for you? And do you mean to employ the stationery you use

at present? Suicidal policy! Hearken to the wisdom of your elders!" he went on, his bass voice growing louder at each syllable. "Either take up your quarters in a garret, live virtuously, and wed your work, or set about the thing in a different way."

Vautrin winked and leered in the direction of Mlle. Taillefer to enforce his remarks by a look which recalled the late tempting proposals by which he had sought to corrupt the student's mind.

Several days went by, and Rastignac lived in a whirl of gaiety. He dined almost every day with Mme. de Nucingen, and went wherever she went, only returning to the Rue Neuve-Sainte-Geneviève in the small hours. He rose at midday, and dressed to go into the Bois with Delphine if the day was fine, squandering in this way time that was worth far more than he knew. He turned as eagerly to learn the lessons of luxury, and was as quick to feel its fascination, as the flowers of the date palm to receive the fertilizing pollen. He played high, lost and won large sums of money, and at

the nature of things that a tailor should be a creditor; but it is otherwise with the hatter; the sums of money spent with him are so modest, that he is the most independent and unmanageable of his tribe, and it is almost impossible to bring him to terms. The young man in the balcony of a theatre who displays a gorgeous waistcoat for the benefit of the fair owners of opera glasses, has very probably no socks in his wardrobe, for the hosier is another of the genus of weevils that nibble at the purse. This was Rastignac's condition. His purse was always empty for Mme. Vauquer, always full at the demand of vanity; there was a periodical ebb and flow in his fortunes, which was seldom favorable to the payment of just debts. If he was to leave that unsavory and mean abode, where from time to time his pretensions met with humiliation, the first step was to pay his hostess for a month's board and lodging, and the second to purchase furniture worthy of the new lodgings he must take in his quality of dandy, a course that remained impossible. Rastignac, out of his winnings at cards, would pay his jeweler exorbitant prices for gold watches and chains, and then, to meet the exigencies of play, would carry them to the pawnbroker, that discreet and forbidding-looking friend of youth; but when it was a question of paying for board or lodging, or for the necessary implements for the cultivation of his Elysian fields, his imagination and pluck alike deserted him. There was no inspiration to be found in vulgar necessity, in debts contracted for past requirements. Like most of those who trust to their luck, he put off till the last moment the payment of debts that among the bourgeoisie are regarded as sacred engagements, acting on the plan of Mirabeau, who never settled his baker's bill until it underwent a formidable transformation into a bill of exchange.

It was about this time when Rastignac was down on his luck and fell into debt, that it became clear to the law student's mind that he must have some more certain source of income if he meant to live as he had been doing. But while he groaned over the thorny problems of his precarious situa-

tion, he felt that he could not bring himself to renounce the pleasures of this extravagant life, and decided that he must continue it at all costs. His dreams of obtaining a fortune appeared more and more chimerical, and the real obstacles grew more formidable. His initiation into the secrets of the Nucingen household had revealed to him that if he were to attempt to use this love affair as a means of mending his fortunes, he must swallow down all sense of decency, and renounce all the generous ideas which redeem the sins of youth. He had chosen this life of apparent splendor, but secretly gnawed by the canker worm of remorse, a life of fleeting pleasure dearly paid for by persistent pain; like *Le Distrait* of La Bruyère, he had descended so far as to make his bed in a ditch; but (also like *Le Distrait*) he himself was uncontaminated as yet by the mire that stained his garments.

"So we have killed our mandarin, have we?" said Bianchon one day as they left the dinner table.

"Not yet," he answered, "but he is at the last gasp."

the talk afterwards he had kept out of the sight of the law student, who quite believed that Vautrin had left the room. He now took up his position cunningly in the sitting-room instead of going when the last boarders went. He had fathomed the young man's thoughts, and felt that a crisis was at hand. Rastignac was, in fact, in a dilemma, which many another young man must have known.

Mme. de Nucingen might love him, or might merely be playing with him, but in either case Rastignac had been made to experience all the alternations of hope and despair of genuine passion, and all the diplomatic arts of a Parisienne had been employed on him. After compromising herself by continually appearing in public with Mme. de Beauséant's cousin she still hesitated, and would not give him the lover's privileges which he appeared to enjoy. For a whole month she had so wrought on his senses, that at last she had made an impression on his heart. If in the earliest days the student had fancied himself to be master, Mme. de Nucingen had since become the stronger of the two, for she had skilfully roused and played upon every instinct, good or bad, in the two or three men comprised in a young student in Paris. This was not the result of deep design on her part, nor was she playing a part, for women are in a manner true to themselves even through their grossest deceit, because their actions are prompted by a natural impulse. It may have been that Delphine, who had allowed this young man to gain such an ascendency over her, conscious that she had been too demonstrative, was obeying a sentiment of dignity, and either repented of her concessions, or it pleased her to suspend them. It is so natural to a Parisienne, even when passion has almost mastered her, to hesitate and pause before taking the plunge; to probe the heart of him to whom she intrusts her future. And once already Mme. de Nucingen's hopes had been betrayed, and her loyalty to a selfish young lover had been despised. She had good reason to be suspicious. Or it may have been that something in Eugène's manner (for his rapid success was making a coxcomb of him) had warned her that

the grotesque nature of their position had lowered her somewhat in his eyes. She doubtless wished to assert her dignity; he was young, and she would be great in his eyes; for the lover who had forsaken her had held her so cheap that she was determined that Eugène should not think her an easy conquest, and for this very reason—he knew that de Marsay had been his predecessor. Finally, after the degradation of submission to the pleasure of a heartless young rake, it was so sweet to her to wander in the flower-strewn realms of love, that it was not wonderful that she should wish to dwell a while on the prospect, to tremble with the vibrations of love, to feel the freshness of the breath of its dawn. The true lover was suffering for the sins of the false. This inconsistency is unfortunately only to be expected so long as men do not know how many flowers are mown down in a young woman's soul by the first stroke of treachery.

Whatever her reasons may have been, Delphine was playing with Rastignac, and took pleasure in playing with him, doubtless because she felt sure of his love, and confident that

science of Vautrin's offer and the possibility of fortune by a marriage with Mlle. Taillefer. Poverty would clamor so loudly that more than once he was on the point of yielding to the cunning temptations of the terrible sphinx, whose glance had so often exerted a strange spell over him.

Poiret and Mlle. Michonneau went up to their rooms; and Rastignac, thinking that he was alone with the women in the dining-room, sat between Mme. Vauquer and Mme. Couture, who was nodding over the woolen cuffs that she was knitting by the stove, and looked at Mlle. Taillefer so tenderly that she lowered her eyes.

"Can you be in trouble, M. Eugène?" Victorine said after a pause.

"Who has not his troubles?" answered Rastignac. "If we men were sure of being loved, sure of a devotion which would be our reward for the sacrifices which we are always ready to make, then perhaps we should have no troubles."

For answer Mlle. Taillefer only gave him a glance, but it was impossible to mistake its meaning.

"You, for instance, mademoiselle; you feel sure of your heart to-day, but are you sure that it will never change?"

A smile flitted over the poor girl's lips; it seemed as if a ray of light from her soul had lighted up her face. Eugène was dismayed at the sudden explosion of feeling caused by his words.

"Ah! but suppose," he said, "that you should be rich and happy to-morrow, suppose that a vast fortune dropped down from the clouds for you, would you still love the man whom you loved in your days of poverty?"

A charming movement of the head was her only answer.

"Even if he were very poor?"

Again the same mute answer.

"What nonsense are you talking, you two?" exclaimed Mme. Vauquer.

"Never mind," answered Eugène; "we understand each other."

"So there is to be an engagement of marriage between

M. le Chevalier Eugène de Rastignac and Mlle. Victorine Taillefer, is there?" The words were uttered in Vautrin's deep voice, and Vautrin appeared at the door as he spoke.

"Oh! how you startled me!" Mme. Couture and Mme. Vauquer exclaimed together.

"I might make a worse choice," said Rastignac, laughing. Vautrin's voice had thrown him into the most painful agitation that he had yet known.

"No bad jokes, gentlemen!" said Mme. Couture. "My dear, let us go upstairs."

Mme. Vauquer followed the two ladies, meaning to pass the evening in their room, an arrangement that economized fire and candlelight. Eugène and Vautrin were left alone.

"I felt sure you would come round to it," said the elder man with the coolness that nothing seemed to shake. "But stay a moment! I have as much delicacy as anybody else. Don't make up your mind on the spur of the moment; you are a little thrown off your balance just now. You are in debt, and I want you to come over to my way of thinking after

honorable, brave as a lion, and as gentle as a young girl. You would be a fine haul for the devil! I like youngsters of your sort. Get rid of one or two more prejudices, and you will see the world as it is. Make a little scene now and then, and act a virtuous part in it, and a man with a head on his shoulders can do exactly as he likes amid deafening applause from the fools in the gallery. Ah! a few days yet, and you will be with us; and if you would only be tutored by me, I would put you in the way of achieving all your ambitions. You should no sooner form a wish than it should be realized to the full; you should have all your desires—honors, wealth, or women. Civilization should flow with milk and honey for you. You should be our pet and favorite, our Benjamin. We would all work ourselves to death for you with pleasure; every obstacle should be removed from your path. You have a few prejudices left; so you think that I am a scoundrel, do you? Well, M. de Turenne, quite as honorable a man as you take yourself to be, had some little private transactions with bandits, and did not feel that his honor was tarnished. You would rather not lie under any obligation to me, eh? You need not draw back on that account," Vautrin went on, and a smile stole over his lips. "Take those bits of paper and write across this," he added, producing a piece of stamped paper, *"Accepted the sum of three thousand five hundred francs due this day twelvemonth,* and fill in the date. The rate of interest is stiff enough to silence any scruples on your part; it gives you the right to call me a Jew. You can call quits with me on the score of gratitude. I am quite willing that you should despise me to-day, because I am sure that you will have a kindlier feeling towards me later on. You will find out fathomless depths in my nature, enormous and concentrated forces that weaklings call vices, but you will never find me base or ungrateful. In short, I am neither a pawn nor a bishop, but a castle, a tower of strength, my boy."

"What manner of man are you?" cried Eugène. "Were you created to torment me?"

be a formidable power before long. He paid Messieurs de Trailles and d'Ajuda, played at whist for part of the evening, and made good his losses. Most men who have their way to make are more or less of fatalists, and Eugène was superstitious; he chose to consider that his luck was heaven's reward for his perseverance in the right way. As soon as possible on the following morning he asked Vautrin whether the bill that he had given was still in the other's possession; and on receiving a reply in the affirmative, he repaid the three thousand francs with a not unnatural relief.

"Everything is going on well," said Vautrin.

"But I am not your accomplice," said Eugène.

"I know, I know," Vautrin broke in. "You are still acting like a child. You are making mountains out of molehills at the outset."

Two days later, Poiret and Mlle. Michonneau were sitting together on a bench in the sun. They had chosen a little frequented alley in the Jardin des Plantes, and a gentleman was chatting with them, the same person, as a matter of fact,

unpublished records made by certain observers will throw a light on the particular species to which Poiret belonged in the great family of fools. There is a race of quill-drivers, confined in the columns of the budget between the first degree of latitude (a kind of administrative Greenland where the salaries begin at twelve hundred francs) to the third degree, a more temperate zone, where incomes grow from three to six thousand francs, a climate where the *bonus* flourishes like a half-hardy annual in spite of some difficulties of culture. A characteristic trait that best reveals the feeble narrow-mindedness of these inhabitants of petty officialdom is a kind of involuntary, mechanical, and instinctive reverence for the Grand Lama of every Ministry, known to the rank and file only by his signature (an illegible scrawl) and by his title—"His Excellency Monseigneur le Ministre," five words which produce as much effect as the *il Bondo Cani* of the *Calife de Bagdad,* five words which in the eyes of this low order of intelligence represent a sacred power from which there is no appeal. The Minister is administratively infallible for the clerks in the employ of the Government, as the Pope is infallible for good Catholics. Something of this peculiar radiance invests everything he does or says, or that is said or done in his name; the robe of office covers everything and legalizes everything done by his orders; does not his very title—His Excellency—vouch for the purity of his intentions and the righteousness of his will, and serve as a sort of passport and introduction to ideas that otherwise would not be entertained for a moment? Pronounce the words "His Excellency," and these poor folk will forthwith proceed to do what they would not do for their own interests. Passive obedience is as well known in a Government department as in the army itself; and the administrative system silences consciences, annihilates the individual, and ends (give it time enough) by fashioning a man into a vise or a thumbscrew, and he becomes part of the machinery of Government. Wherefore, M. Gondureau, who seemed to know something of human nature, recognized Poiret at once as one

of these dupes of officialdom, and brought out for his benefit at the proper moment, the *deus ex machinâ*, the magical words "His Excellency," so as to dazzle Poiret just as he himself unmasked his batteries, for he took Poiret and the Michonneau for the male and female of the same species.

"If his Excellency himself, his Excellency the Minister . . . Ah! that is quite another thing," said Poiret.

"You seem to be guided by this gentleman's opinion, and you hear what he says," said the man of independent means, addressing Mlle. Michonneau. "Very well, his Excellency is at this moment absolutely certain that the so-called Vautrin, who lodges at the Maison Vauquer, is a convict who escaped from penal servitude at Toulon, where he is known by the nickname *Trompe-la-Mort.*"

"Trompe-la-Mort?" said Pioret. "Dear me, he is very lucky if he deserves that nickname."

"Well, yes," said the detective. "They call him so because he has been so lucky as not to lose his life in the very risky businesses that he has carried through. He is a danger-

He makes a very good thing out of managing their affairs, which want a *man of mark* to see about them."

"Ha! ha! do you see the pun, mademoiselle?" asked Poiret. "This gentleman calls him a *man of mark* because he is a *marked man*—branded, you know."

"This so-called Vautrin," said the detective, "receives the money belonging to my lords the convicts, invests it for them, and holds it at the disposal of those who escape, or hands it over to their families if they leave a will, or to their mistresses when they draw upon him for their benefit."

"Their mistresses! You mean their wives," remarked Poiret.

"No, sir. A convict's wife is usually an illegitimate connection. We call them concubines."

"Then they all live in a state of concubinage?"

"Naturally."

"Why, these are abominations that his Excellency ought not to allow. Since you have the honor of seeing his Excellency, you, who seem to have philanthropic ideas, ought really to enlighten him as to their immoral conduct—they are setting a shocking example to the rest of society."

"But the Government does not hold them up as models of all the virtues, my dear sir——"

"Of course not, sir; but still——"

"Just let the gentleman say what he has to say, dearie," said Mlle. Michonneau.

"You see how it is, mademoiselle," Gondureau continued. "The Government may have the strongest reasons for getting this illicit hoard into its hands; it mounts up to something considerable, by all that we can make out. Trompe-la-Mort not only holds large sums for his friends the convicts, but he has other amounts which are paid over to him by the Society of the Ten Thousand——"

"Ten Thousand Thieves!" cried Pioret in alarm.

"No. The Society of the Ten Thousand is not an association of petty offenders, but of people who set about their work on a large scale—they won't touch a matter unless there

are ten thousand francs in it. It is composed of the most distinguished of the men who are sent straight to the Assize Courts when they come up for trial. They know the Code too well to risk their necks when they are nabbed. Collin is their confidential agent and legal adviser. By means of the large sums of money at his disposal he has established a sort of detective system of his own; it is widespread and mysterious in its workings. We have had spies all about him for a twelvemonth, and yet we could not manage to fathom his games. His capital and his cleverness are at the service of vice and crime; this money furnishes the necessary funds for a regular army of blackguards in his pay who wage incessant war against society. If we can catch Trompe-la-Mort, and take possession of his funds, we should strike at the root of this evil. So this job is a kind of Government affair—a State secret—and likely to redound to the honor of those who bring the thing to a successful conclusion. You, sir, for instance, might very well be taken into a Government department again; they might make you secretary to a Commissary

ng to him.—Trompe-la-Mort, when he came back here," he rent on aloud "slipped into the skin of an honest man; he urned up disguised as a decent Parisian citizen, and took ıp his quarters in an unpretending lodging-house. He is unning, that he is! You don't catch him napping. Then f. Vautrin is a man of consequence, who transacts a good leal of business."

"Naturally," said Poiret to himself.

"And suppose that the Minister were to make a mistake ınd get hold of the real Vautrin, he would put every one's ack up among the business men in Paris, and public opinon would be against him. M. le Préfet de Police is on lippery ground; he has enemies. They would take advanage of any mistake. There would be a fine outcry and uss made by the Opposition, and he would be sent packng. We must set about this just as we did about the Coignard affair, the sham Comte de Sainte-Hélène; if he had een the real Comte de Sainte-Hélène, we should have been n the wrong box. We want to be quite sure what we are ıbout."

"Yes, but what you want is a pretty woman," said Mlle. Michonneau briskly.

"Trompe-la-Mort would not let a woman come near him," aid the detective. "I will tell you a secret—he does not like them."

"Still, I do not see what I can do, supposing that I did ıgree to identify him for two thousand francs."

"Nothing simpler," said the stranger "I will send you a little bottle containing a dose that will send a rush of blood o the head; it will do him no harm whatever, but he will fall down as if he were in a fit. The drug can be put into wine or coffee; either will do equally well. You carry your man to bed at once, and undress him to see that he is not dyng. As soon as you are alone, you give him a slap on the shoulder, and *presto!* the letters will appear."

"Why, that is just nothing at all," said Poiret.

"Well, do you agree?" said Gondureau, addressing the old maid.

"But, my dear sir, suppose there are no letters at all," said Mlle. Michonneau; "am I to have the two thousand francs all the same?"

"No."

"What will you give me then?"

"Five hundred francs."

"It is such a thing to do for so little! It lies on your conscience just the same, and I must quiet my conscience, sir."

"I assure you," said Poiret, "that mademoiselle has a great deal of conscience, and not only so, she is a very amiable person, and very intelligent."

"Well, now," Mlle. Michonneau went on, "make it three thousand francs if he is Trompe-la-Mort, and nothing at all if he is an ordinary man."

"Done!" said Gondureau, "but on condition that the thing is settled to-morrow."

"Not quite so soon, my dear sir; I must consult my confessor first."

"You are a sly one," said the detective as he rose to his

"Anyhow," thought Mlle. Michonneau, "I can't abide him. He says nothing but disagreeable things to me."

"But you can do better than that," Poiret resumed. "As that gentleman said (and he seemed to me to be a very good sort of man, besides being very well got up), it is an act of obedience to the laws to rid society of a criminal, however virtuous he may be. Once a thief, always a thief. Suppose he were to take it into his head to murder us all? The deuce! We should be guilty of manslaughter, and be the first to fall victims into the bargain!"

Mlle. Michonneau's musings did not permit her to listen very closely to the remarks that fell one by one from Poiret's lips like water dripping from a leaky tap. When once this elderly babbler began to talk, he would go on like clockwork unless Mlle. Michonneau stopped him. He started on some subject or other, and wandered on through parenthesis after parenthesis, till he came to regions as remote as possible from his premises without coming to any conclusions by the way.

By the time they reached the Maison Vauquer he had tacked together a whole string of examples and quotations more or less irrelevant to the subject in hand, which led him to give a full account of his own deposition in the case of the Sieur Ragoulleau *versus* Dame Morin, when he had been summoned as a witness for the defence.

As they entered the dining-room, Eugène de Rastignac was talking apart with Mlle. Taillefer; the conversation appeared to be of such thrilling interest that the pair never noticed the two older lodgers as they passed through the room. None of this was thrown away on Mlle. Michonneau.

"I knew how it would end," remarked that lady, addressing Poiret. "They have been making eyes at each other in a heartrending way for a week past."

"Yes," he answered. "So she was found guilty."

"Who?"

"Mme. Morin."

"I am talking about Mlle. Victorine," said Mlle. Michonneau, as she entered Poiret's room with an absent air, "and you answer, 'Mme. Morin.' Who may Mme. Morin be?"

"What can Mlle. Victorine be guilty of?" demanded Poiret.

"Guilty of falling in love with M. Eugène de Rastignac, and going further and further without knowing exactly where she is going, poor innocent!"

That morning Mme. de Nucingen had driven Eugène to despair. In his own mind he had completely surrendered himself to Vautrin, and deliberately shut his eyes to the motive for the friendship which that extraordinary man professed for him, nor would he look to the consequences of such an alliance. Nothing short of a miracle could extricate him now out of the gulf into which he had walked an hour ago, when he exchanged vows in the softest whispers with Mlle. Taillefer. To Victorine it seemed as if she heard an angel's voice, that heaven was opening above her; the Maison Vauquer took strange and wonderful hues, like a stage fairy-palace. She loved and she was beloved; at any rate, she believed that she was loved; and what woman would not likewise have believed after seeing Rastignac's face and listening

ssure of the hand, the light touch of Rastignac's hair st her cheek, a word whispered in her ear so closely that lt the student's warm breath on her, the pressure of a ling arm about her waist, a kiss upon her throat—such een her betrothal. The near neighborhood of the stout , who might invade that glorified room at any moment, nade these first tokens of love more ardent, more elo- , more entrancing than the noblest deeds done for love's n the most famous romances. This *plain-song* of love, the pretty expression of our forefathers, seemed almost al to the devout young girl who went to confession every ght. In that one hour she had poured out more of the ires of her soul than she could give in later days of h and happiness, when her whole self followed the gift.

he thing is arranged," Vautrin said to Eugène, who re- d. "Our two dandies have fallen out. Everything was in proper form. It is a matter of opinion. Our pigeon sulted my hawk. They will meet to-morrow in the re- at Clignancourt. By half-past eight in the morning Taillefer, calmly dipping her bread and butter in her cup, will be sole heiress of her father's fortune and af- ns. A funny way of putting it, isn't it? Taillefer's ster is an expert swordsman, and quite cocksure about t he will be bled; I have just invented a thrust for his t, a way of raising your sword point and driving it at rehead. I must show you that thrust; it is an uncom- handy thing to know."

stignac heard him in dazed bewilderment; he could not word in reply. Just then Goriot came in, and Bian- and a few of the boarders likewise appeared.

hat is just as I intended," Vautrin said. "You know well what you are about. Good, my little eaglet! You orn to command, you are strong, you stand firm on your you are game! I respect you."

made as though he would take Eugène's hand, but Ras- hastily withdrew it, sank into a chair, and turned ly pale; it seemed to him that there was a sea of blood his eyes.

go to the chimney-piece and set upon it a little red morocco case with Rastignac's arms stamped in gold on the leather.

"My dear boy," said the kind soul, "I have been up to the eyes in this business. You see, there was plenty of selfishness on my part; I have an interested motive in helping you to change lodgings. You will not refuse me if I ask you something; will you, eh?"

"What is it?"

"There is a room on the fifth floor, up above your rooms, that is to let along with them; that is where I am going to live, isn't that so? I am getting old; I am too far from my girls. I shall not be in the way, but I shall be there, that is all. You will come and talk to me about her every evening. It will not put you about, will it? I shall have gone to bed before you come in, but I shall hear you come up, and I shall say to myself, 'He has just seen my little Delphine. He has been to a dance with her, and she is happy, thanks to him.' If I were ill, it would do my heart good to hear you moving about below, to know when you leave the house and when you come in. It is only a step to the Champs-Élysées, where they go every day, so I shall be sure of seeing them, whereas now I am sometimes too late. And then—perhaps she may come to see you! I shall hear her, I shall see her in her soft quilted pelisse tripping about as daintily as a kitten. In this one month she has become my little girl again, so light-hearted and gay. Her soul is recovering, and her happiness is owing to you! Oh! I would do impossibilities for you. Only just now she said to me, 'I am very happy, papa!' When they say 'father' stiffly, it sends a chill through me; but when they call me 'papa,' it is as if they were little girls again, and it brings all the old memories back. I feel most their father then; I even believe that they belong to me, and to no one else."

The good man wiped his eyes, he was crying.

"It is a long while since I have heard them talk like that, a long, long time since she took my arm as she did to-day. Yes, indeed, it must be quite ten years since I walked side by side with one of my girls. How pleasant it was to keep step with

her, to feel the touch of her gown, the warmth of her arm. Well, I took Delphine everywhere this morning; I went shopping with her, and I brought her home again. Oh! you must let me live near you. You may want some one to do you a service some of these days, and I shall be on the spot to do it. Oh! if only that great dolt of an Alsatian would die, if his gout would have the sense to attack his stomach, how happy my poor child would be! You would be my son-in-law; you would be her husband in the eyes of the world. Bah! she has known no happiness, that excuses everything. Our Father in heaven is surely on the side of fathers on earth who love their children. How fond of you she is!" he said, raising his head after a pause. "All the time we were going about together she chatted away about you. 'He is nice-looking, papa; isn't he? He is kind-hearted! Does he talk to you about me?' Pshaw! she said enough about you to fill whole volumes; between the Rue d'Artois and the Passage des Panoramas she poured her heart out into mine. I did not feel old once during that delightful morning; I felt as light as a feather. I told her how you had given that banknote to me;

touched. Inside the gold watch-case his arms had been wrought in enamel. The chain, the key, the workmanship and design of the trinket were all such as he had imagined, for he had long coveted such a possession. Father Goriot was radiant. Of course he had promised to tell his daughter every little detail of the scene and of the effect produced upon Eugène by her present; he shared in the pleasure and excitement of the young people, and seemed to be not the least happy of the three. He loved Rastignac already for his own as well as for his daughter's sake.

"You must go and see her; she is expecting you this evening. That great lout of an Alsatian is going to have supper with his opera-dancer. Aha! he looked very foolish when my attorney let him know where he was. He says he idolizes my daughter, does he? He had better let her alone, or I will kill him. To think that my Delphine is his"—he heaved a sigh—"it is enough to make me murder him, but it would not be manslaughter to kill that animal; he is a pig with a calf's brains.—You will take me with you, will you not?"

"Yes, dear Father Goriot; you know very well how fond I am of you——"

"Yes, I do know very well. You are not ashamed of me, are you? Not you! Let me embrace you," and he flung his arms round the student's neck.

"You will make her very happy; promise me that you will! You will go to her this evening, will you not?"

"Oh! yes. I must go out; I have some urgent business on hand."

"Can I be of any use?"

"My word, yes! Will you go to old Taillefer's while I go to Mme. de Nucingen? Ask him to make an appointment with me some time this evening; it is a matter of life and death."

"Really, young man!" cried Father Goriot, with a change of countenance; "are you really paying court to his daughter, as those simpletons were saying down below? . . . *Tonnerre de Dieu!* you have no notion what a tap *à la Goriot* is

"Corked!" he cried. "The devil! You can drink the rest of this, Christophe, and go and find another bottle; take from the right-hand side, you know. There are sixteen of us; take down eight bottles."

"If you are going to stand treat," said the painter, "I will pay for a hundred chestnuts."

"Oh! oh!"

"Booououh!"

"Prrr!"

These exclamations came from all parts of the table like squibs from a set firework.

"Come, now, Mamma Vauquer, a couple of bottles of champagne," called Vautrin.

"*Quien!* just like you! Why not ask for the whole house at once. A couple of bottles of champagne; that means twelve francs! I shall never see the money back again, I know! But if M. Eugène has a mind to pay for it, I have some currant cordial."

"That currant cordial of hers is as bad as a black draught,"

"China to mend!"

"Boat ahoy!"

"Sticks to beat your wives or your clothes!"

"Old clo'!"

"Cherries all ripe!"

But the palm was awarded to Bianchon for the nasal accent with which he rendered the cry of "Umbrellas to me-end!"

A few seconds later, and there was a head-splitting racket in the room, a storm of tomfoolery, a sort of cats' concert, with Vautrin as conductor of the orchestra, the latter keeping an eye the while on Eugène and Father Goriot. The wine seemed to have gone to their heads already. They leaned back in their chairs, looking at the general confusion with an air of gravity, and drank but little; both of them were absorbed in the thought of what lay before them to do that evening, and yet neither of them felt able to rise and go. Vautrin gave a side glance at them from time to time, and watched the change that came over their faces, choosing the moment when their eyes drooped and seemed about to close, to bend over Rastignac and to say in his ear:—

"My little lad, you are not quite shrewd enough to outwit Papa Vautrin yet, and he is too fond of you to let you make a mess of your affairs. When I have made up my mind to do a thing, no one short of Providence can put me off. Aha! we were for going round to warn old Taillefer, telling tales out of school! The oven is hot, the dough is kneaded, the bread is ready for the oven; to-morrow we will eat it up and whisk away the crumbs; and we are not going to spoil the baking? . . . No, no, it is all as good as done! We may suffer from a few conscientious scruples, but they will be digested along with the bread. While we are having our forty winks, Colonel Count Franchessini will clear the way to Michel Taillefer's inheritance with the point of his sword. Victorine will come in for her brother's money, a snug fifteen thousand francs a year. I have made inquiries already, and I

know that her late mother's property amounts to more than three hundred thousand——"

Eugène heard all this, and could not answer a word; his tongue seemed to be glued to the roof of his mouth, an irresistible drowsiness was creeping over him. He still saw the table and the faces round it, but it was through a bright mist. Soon the noise began to subside, one by one the boarders went. At last, when their numbers had so dwindled that the party consisted of Mme. Vauquer, Mme. Couture, Mlle. Victorine, Vautrin, and Father Goriot, Rastignac watched as though in a dream how Mme. Vauquer busied herself by collecting the bottles, and drained the remainder of the wine out of each to fill others.

"Oh! how uproarious they are! what a thing it is to be young!" said the widow.

These were the last words that Eugène heard and understood.

"There is no one like M. Vautrin for a bit of fun like this," said Sylvie. "There, just hark at Christophe, he is snoring like a top."

more comfortably on the back of his chair, kissed him warmly on the forehead, and began to sing:

"Sleep, little darlings;
I watch while you slumber."

"I am afraid he may be ill," said Victorine.

"Then stop and take care of him," returned Vautrin. "'Tis your duty as a meek and obedient wife," he whispered in her ear. "The young fellow worships you, and you will be his little wife—there's your fortune for you. In short," he added aloud, "they lived happily ever afterwards, were much looked up to in all the countryside, and had a numerous family. That is how all the romances end.—Now, mamma," he went on, as he turned to Madame Vauquer and put his arm round her waist, "put on your bonnet, your best flowered silk, and the countess' scarf, while I go out and call a cab—all my own self."

And he started out, singing as he went:

"Oh! sun! divine sun!
Ripening the pumpkins every one."

"My goodness! Well, I'm sure! Mme. Couture, I could live happily in a garret with a man like that.—There, now!" she added, looking round for the old vermicelli maker, "there is that Father Goriot half seas over. *He* never thought of taking me anywhere, the old skinflint. But he will measure his length somewhere. My word! it is disgraceful to lose his senses like that, at his age! You will be telling me that he couldn't lose what he hadn't got—Sylvie, just take him up to his room!"

Sylvie took him by the arm, supported him upstairs, and flung him just as he was, like a package, across the bed.

"Poor young fellow!" said Mme. Couture, putting back Eugène's hair that had fallen over his eyes; "he is like a young girl, he does not know what dissipation is."

"Well, I can tell you this, I know," s
"I have taken lodgers these thirty years
have passed through my hands, as the sa
never seen a nicer nor a more aristocratic
than M. Eugène. How handsome he lo
let his head rest on your shoulder, Mme.
he falls over towards Mlle. Victorine.
providence for young things. A little n
have broken his head against the knob of
make a pretty pair those two would!"

"Hush, my good neighbor," cried M
are saying such things——"

"Pooh!" put in Mme. Vauquer, "he do
Sylvie! come and help

"Poor, dear child!" said Mme. Couture, squeezing her hand.

The old lady looked at the girl. Victorine's innocent, pathetic face, so radiant with the new happiness that had befallen her, called to mind some naïve work of mediæval art, when the painter neglected the accessories, reserving all the magic of his brush for the quiet, austere outlines and ivory tints of the face, which seems to have caught something of the golden glory of heaven.

"After all, he only took two glasses, mamma," said Victorine, passing her fingers through Eugène's hair.

"Indeed, if he had been a dissipated young man, child, he would have carried his wine like the rest of them. His drowsiness does him credit."

There was a sound of wheels outside in the street.

"There is M. Vautrin, mamma," said the girl. "Just take M. Eugène. I would rather not have that man see me like this; there are some ways of looking at you that seem to sully your soul and make you feel as though you had nothing on."

"Oh, no, you are wrong!" said Mme. Couture. "M. Vautrin is a worthy man; he reminds me a little of my late husband, poor dear M. Couture, rough but kind-hearted; his bark is worse than his bite."

Vautrin came in while she was speaking; he did not make a sound, but looked for a while at the picture of the two young faces—the lamplight falling full upon them seemed to caress them.

"Well," he remarked, folding his arms, "here is a picture! It would have suggested some pleasing pages to Bernardin de Saint-Pierre (good soul), who wrote *Paul et Virginie.* Youth is very charming, Mme Couture!—Sleep on, poor boy," he added, looking at Eugène, "luck sometimes comes while we are sleeping.—There is something touching and attractive to me about this young man, madame," he continued; "I know that his nature is in harmony with his face. Just look, the head of a cherub on an angel's shoulder! He deserves to be loved. If I were a woman, I would die (no—not

such a fool), I would live for him." He bent lower and spoke in the widow's ear. "When I see those two together, madame, I cannot help thinking that Providence meant them for each other; He works by secret ways, and tries the reins and the heart," he said in a loud voice. "And when I see you, my children, thus united by a like purity and by all human affections, I say to myself that it is quite impossible that the future should separate you. God is just."—He turned to Victorine. "It seems to me," he said, "that I have seen the line of success in your hand. Let me look at it, Mlle. Victorine; I am well up in palmistry, and I have told fortunes many a time. Come, now, don't be frightened. Ah! what do I see? Upon my word, you will be one of the richest heiresses in Paris before very long. You will heap riches on the man who loves you. Your father will want you to go and live with him. You will marry a young and handsome man with a title, and he will idolize you."

The heavy footsteps of the coquettish widow, who was coming down the stairs, interrupted Vautrin's fortune-telling. "Here is Mamma Vauquerre, fair as a starr-r-r-

"Oh! mamma dear, suppose it should really happen as that kind M. Vautrin said!" said Victorine with a sigh as she looked at her hands. The two women were alone together.

"Why, it wouldn't take much to bring it to pass," said the elderly lady; "just a fall from his horse, and your monster of a brother——"

"Oh! mamma."

"Good Lord! Well, perhaps it is a sin to wish bad luck to an enemy," the widow remarked. "I will do penance for it. Still, I would strew flowers on his grave with the greatest pleasure, and that is the truth. Black-hearted, that he is! The coward couldn't speak up for his own mother, and cheats you out of your share by deceit and trickery. My cousin had a pretty fortune of her own, but unluckily for you, nothing was said in the marriage-contract about anything that she might come in for."

"It would be very hard if my fortune is to cost some one else his life," said Victorine. "If I cannot be happy unless my brother is to be taken out of the world, I would rather stay here all my life."

"*Mon Dieu!* it is just as that good M. Vautrin says, and he is full of piety, you see," Mme. Couture remarked. "I am very glad to find that he is not an unbeliever like the rest of them that talk of the Almighty with less respect than they do of the Devil. Well, as he was saying, who can know the ways by which it may please Providence to lead us?"

With Sylvie's help the two women at last succeeded in getting Eugène up to his room; they laid him on the bed, and the cook unfastened his clothes to make him more comfortable. Before they left the room, Victorine snatched an opportunity when her guardian's back was turned, and pressed a kiss on Eugène's forehead, feeling all the joy that this stolen pleasure could give her. Then she looked round the room, and gathering up, as it were, into one single thought all the untold bliss of that day, she made a picture of her memories, and dwelt upon it until she slept, the happiest creature in Paris.

That evening's merry-making, in the course of which Vautrin had given the drugged wine to Eugène and Father Goriot, was his own ruin. Bianchon, flustered with wine, forgot to open the subject of Trompe-la-Mort with Mlle. Michonneau. The mere mention of the name would have set Vautrin on his guard; for Vautrin, or, to give him his real name, Jacques Collin, was in fact the notorious escaped convict.

But it was the joke about the Venus of Père-Lachaise that finally decided his fate. Mlle. Michonneau had very nearly made up her mind to warn the convict and to throw herself on his generosity, with the idea of making a better bargain for herself by helping him to escape that night; but as it was, she went out escorted by Poiret in search of the famous chief of detectives in the Petite Rue Saint-Anne, still thinking that it was the district superintendent—one Gondureau—with whom she had to do. The head of the department received his visitors courteously. There was a little talk, and the details were definitely arranged. Mlle. Michonneau asked for the draught that she was to administer in order to set about her investigation. But the great man's evident satisfaction

ed the two slang words for her benefit. *Sorbonne* and *p* are two forcible expressions borrowed from thieves' , thieves, of all people, being compelled to consider the n head in its two aspects. A *sorbonne* is the head of ng man, his faculty of thinking—his council; a *chump* contemptuous epithet that implies how little a human is worth after the axe has done its work.

ollin is playing us off," he continued. "When we come s a man like a bar of steel tempered in the English on, there is always one resource left—we can kill him if kes it into his head to make the least resistance. We eckoning on several methods of killing Collin to-morrow ing. It saves a trial, and society is rid of him without e expense of guarding and feeding him. What with g up the case, summoning witnesses, paying their ex- s, and carrying out the sentence, it costs a lot to go gh all the proper formalities before you can get quit e of these good-for-nothings, over and above the three and francs that you are going to have. There is a sav- n time as well. One good thrust of the bayonet into pe-la-Mort's paunch will prevent scores of crimes, and fifty scoundrels from following his example; they will ry careful to keep themselves out of the police courts. is doing the work of the police thoroughly, and true nthropists will tell you that it is better to prevent crime to punish it."

nd you do a service to our country," said Poiret.

eally, you are talking in a very sensible manner to- , that you are," said the head of the department. "Yes, urse, we are serving our country, and we are very hardly too. We do society very great services that are not nized. In fact, a superior man must rise above vulgar idices, and a Christian must resign himself to the mis- that doing right entails, when right is done in an out- e-way style. Paris is Paris, you see! That is the ex- ition of my life.—I have the honor to wish you a good- ng, mademoiselle. I shall bring my men to the Jardin

the others dumb with amazement
morning in Paris?" added Vau

"I will go with you, Victorin
the two women hurried away at
shawls. But before she went, V
of tears, gave Eugène a glance
thought that our happiness shoul

"Dear me, you are a prophet,
Vauquer.

"I am all sorts of things," said

"Queer, isn't it?" said Mme. V
a succession of commonplaces
"Death takes us off without askin
often go before the old. It is a l
that we are not liable to fight duel
plaints that men don't suffer from
it takes a long time to get over it.
torine! Her father will have to ac

"There!" said Vautrin, looking
had not a penny; this morning sh
her fortune."

"I say, M. Eugène!" cried M
landed on your feet!"

At this exclamation, Father Gor
and saw the crumpled letter still in

"You have

gène, turning to Mme. Vauquer with an expression of terror and loathing that surprised the onlookers at this scene.

Father Goriot caught the student's hand and grasped it warmly. He could have kissed it.

"Oh, ho!" said Vautrin, "the Italians have a good proverb —*Col tempo.*"

"Is there any answer?" said Mme. de Nucingen's messenger, addressing Eugéne.

"Say that I will come directly."

The man went. Eugène was in a state of such violent excitement that he could not be prudent.

"What is to be done?" he exclaimed aloud. "There are no proofs!"

Vautrin began to smile. Though the drug he had taken was doing its work, the convict was so vigorous that he rose to his feet, gave Rastignac a look, and said in hollow tones, "Luck comes to us while we sleep, young man," and fell stiff and stark, as if he were struck dead.

"So there is a Divine Justice!" said Eugène.

"Well, if ever! What has come to that poor dear M. Vautrin?"

"A stroke!" cried Mlle. Michonneau.

"Here, Sylvie! girl, run for the doctor," called the widow. "Oh, M. Rastignac, just go for M. Bianchon, and be as quick as you can; Sylvie might not be in time to catch our doctor, M. Grimprel."

Rastignac was glad of an excuse to leave that den of horrors, his hurry for the doctor was nothing but a flight.

"Here, Christophe, go round to the chemist's and ask for something that's good for the apoplexy."

Christophe likewise went.

"Father Goriot, just help us to get him upstairs."

Vautrin was taken up among them, carried carefully up the narrow staircase, and laid upon his bed.

"I can do no good here, so I shall go to see my daughter," said M. Goriot.

"Selfish old thing!" cried Mme. Vauquer. "Yes, go; I wish you may die like a dog."

"Just go and see if you can find some ether," said Mlle. Michonneau to Mme. Vauquer; the former, with some help from Poiret, had unfastened the sick man's clothes.

Mme. Vauquer went down to her room, and left Mlle. Michonneau mistress of the situation.

"Now! just pull down his shirt and turn him over, quick! You might be of some use in sparing my modesty," she said to Poiret, "instead of standing there like a stock."

Vautrin was turned over; Mlle. Michonneau gave his shoulder a sharp slap, and the two portentous letters appeared, white against the red.

"There, you have earned your three thousand francs very easily," exclaimed Poiret, supporting Vautrin while Mlle. Michonneau slipped on the shirt again.—"Ouf! How heavy he is," he added, as he laid the convict down.

"Hush! Suppose there is a strong-box here!" said the old maid briskly; her glances seemed to pierce the walls, she scrutinized every article of the furniture with greedy eyes

is as strong as a Turk. Just look, mademoiselle, what a fur tippet he has on his chest; that is the sort of man to live till he is a hundred. His wig holds on tightly, however. Dear me! it is glued on, and his own hair is red; that is why he wears a wig. They always say that red-haired people are either the worst or the best. Is he one of the good ones, I wonder?"

"Good to hang," said Poiret.

"Round a pretty woman's neck, you mean," said Mlle. Michonneau, hastily. "Just go away, M. Poiret. It is a woman's duty to nurse you men when you are ill. Besides, for all the good you are doing, you may as well take yourself off," she added. "Mme. Vauquer and I will take great care of dear M. Vautrin."

Poiret went out on tiptoe without a murmur, like a dog kicked out of the room by his master.

Rastignac had gone out for the sake of physical exertion; he wanted to breathe the air, he felt stifled. Yesterday evening he had meant to prevent the murder arranged for half-past eight that morning. What had happened? What ought he to do now? He trembled to think that he himself might be implicated. Vautrin's coolness still further dismayed him.

"Yet, how if Vautrin should die without saying a word?" Rastignac asked himself.

He hurried along the alleys of the Luxembourg Gardens as if the hounds of justice were after him, and he already heard the baying of the pack.

"Well?" shouted Bianchon, "you have seen the *Pilote*?"

The *Pilote* was a Radical sheet, edited by M. Tissot. It came out several hours later than the morning papers, and was meant for the benefit of country subscribers; for it brought the morning news into provincial districts twenty-four hours sooner than the ordinary local journals.

"There is a wonderful history in it," said the house student of the Hôpital Cochin. "Young Taillefer called out Count Franchessini, of the Old Guard, and the Count put a couple

of inches of steel into his forehead. And here is little Victorine one of the richest heiresses in Paris! If we had known that, eh? What a game of chance death is! They said Victorine was sweet on you; was there any truth in it?"

"Shut up, Bianchon; I shall never marry her. I am in love with a charming woman, and she is in love with me, so——"

"You said that as if you were screwing yourself up to be faithful to her. I should like to see the woman worth the sacrifice of Master Taillefer's money!"

"Are all the devils of hell at my heels?" cried Rastignac.

"What is the matter with you? Are you mad? Give us your hand," said Bianchon, "and let me feel your pulse. You are feverish."

"Just go to Mother Vauquer's," said Rastignac; "that scoundrel Vautrin has dropped down like one dead."

"Aha!" said Bianchon, leaving Rastignac to his reflections, "you confirm my suspicions, and now I mean to make sure for myself."

The law student's long walk was a memorable one for him

He took out his watch and admired it.

"I have had nothing but success! If two people mean to love each other for ever, they may help each other, and I can take this. Besides, I shall succeed, and I will pay her a hundredfold. There is nothing criminal in this *liaison;* nothing that could cause the most austere moralist to frown. How many respectable people contract similar unions! We deceive nobody; it is deception that makes a position humiliating. If you lie, you lower yourself at once. She and her husband have lived apart for a long while. Besides, how if I called upon that Alsatian to resign a wife whom he cannot make happy?"

Rastignac's battle with himself went on for a long while; and though the scruples of youth inevitably gained the day, an irresistible curiosity led him, about half-past four, to return to the Maison Vauquer through the gathering dusk.

Bianchon had given Vautrin an emetic, reserving the contents of the stomach for chemical analysis at the hospital. Mlle. Michonneau's officious alacrity had still further strengthened his suspicions of her. Vautrin, moreover, had recovered so quickly that it was impossible not to suspect some plot against the leader of all frolics at the lodging-house. Vautrin was standing in front of the stove in the dining-room when Rastignac came in. All the lodgers were assembled sooner than usual by the news of young Taillefer's duel. They were anxious to hear any detail about the affair, and to talk over the probable change in Victorine's prospects. Father Goriot alone was absent, but the rest were chatting. No sooner did Eugène come into the room, than his eyes met the inscrutable gaze of Vautrin. It was the same look that had read his thoughts before—the look that had such power to waken evil thoughts in his heart. He shuddered.

"Well, dear boy," said the escaped convict, "I am likely to cheat death for a good while yet. According to these ladies, I have had a stroke that would have felled an ox, and come off with flying colors."

"A bull you might say" cried the widow.

"You really might be sorry to see me still alive," said Vautrin in Rastignac's ear, thinking that he guessed the student's thoughts. "You must be mighty sure of yourself."

"Mlle. Michonneau was talking the day before yesterday about a gentleman nicknamed *Trompe-la-Mort*," said Bianchon; "and, upon my word, that name would do very well for you."

Vautrin seemed thunderstruck. He turned pale, and staggered back. He turned his magnetic glance, like a ray of vivid light, on Mlle. Michonneau; the old maid shrank and trembled under the influence of that strong will, and collapsed into a chair. The mask of good-nature had dropped from the convict's face; from the unmistakable ferocity of that sinister look, Poiret felt that the old maid was in danger, and hastily stepped between them. None of the lodgers understood this scene in the least, they looked on in mute amazement. There was a pause. Just then there was a sound of tramping feet outside; there were soldiers there, it seemed, for there was a ring of several rifles on the pavement of the street. Collin was mechanically looking round the walls for

in the short, brick-red crop of hair, the whole head was in harmony with his powerful frame, and at that moment the fires of hell seemed to gleam from his eyes. In that flash the real Vautrin shone forth, revealed at once before them all; they understood his past, his present, and future, his pitiless doctrines, his actions, the religion of his own good pleasure, the majesty with which his cynicism and contempt for mankind invested him, the physical strength of an organization proof against all trials. The blood flew to his face, and his eyes glared like the eyes of a wild cat. He started back with savage energy and a fierce growl that drew exclamations of alarm from the lodgers. At that leonine start the police caught at their pistols under cover of the general clamor. Collin saw the gleaming muzzles of the weapons, saw his danger, and instantly gave proof of a power of the highest order. There was something horrible and majestic in the spectacle of the sudden transformation in his face; he could only be compared to a cauldron full of the steam that can send mountains flying, a terrific force dispelled in a moment by a drop of cold water. The drop of water that cooled his wrathful fury was a reflection that flashed across his brain like lightning. He began to smile, and looked down at his wig.

"You are not in the politest of humors to-day," he remarked to the chief, and he held out his hands to the policemen with a jerk of his head.

"Gentlemen," he said, "put on the bracelets or the handcuffs. I call on those present to witness that I make no resistance."

A murmur of admiration ran through the room at the sudden outpouring like fire and lava flood from this human volcano, and its equally sudden cessation.

"There's a sell for you, master crusher," the convict added, looking at the famous director of police.

"Come, strip!" said he of the Petite Rue Saint-Anne, contemptuously.

"Why?" asked Collin. "There are ladies present; I deny nothing, and surrender."

He paused, and looked round the room like an orator who is about to overwhelm his audience.

"Take this down, Daddy Lachapelle," he went on, addressing a little, white-haired old man who had seated himself at the end of the table; and after drawing a printed form from a portfolio, was proceeding to draw up a document. "I acknowledge myself to be Jacques Collin, otherwise known as Trompe-la-Mort, condemned to twenty years' penal servitude, and I have just proved that I have come fairly by my nickname.—If I had as much as raised my hand," he went on, addressing the other lodgers, "those three sneaking wretches yonder would have drawn claret on Mamma Vauquer's domestic hearth. The rogues have laid their heads together to set a trap for me."

Mme. Vauquer felt sick and faint at these words.

"Good Lord!" she cried, "this does give one a turn; and me at the Gaîté with him only last night!" she said to Sylvie.

"Summon your philosophy, mamma," Collin resumed. "I

palling grandeur, its triviality and its dark depths, were all revealed in turn by the speaker's discourse; he seemed to be no longer a man, but the type and mouthpiece of a degenerate race, a brutal, supple, clear-headed race of savages. In one moment Collin became the poet of an inferno, wherein all thoughts and passions that move human nature (save repentance) find a place. He looked about him like a fallen archangel who is for war to the end. Rastignac lowered his eyes, and acknowledged this kinship claimed by crime as an expiation of his own evil thoughts.

"Who betrayed me?" said Collin, and his terrible eyes traveled round the room. Suddenly they rested on Mlle. Michonneau.

"It was you, old cat!" he said. "That sham stroke of apoplexy was your doing, lynx eyes! . . . Two words from me, and your throat would be cut in less than a week, but I forgive you, I am a Christian. You did not sell me either. But who did?—— Aha! you may rummage upstairs," he shouted, hearing the police officers opening his cupboards and taking possession of his effects. "The nest is empty, the birds flew away yesterday, and you will be none the wiser. My ledgers are here," he said, tapping his forehead. "Now I know who sold me! It could only be that blackguard Fil-de-Soie. That is who it was, old catchpoll, eh?" he said, turning to the chief. "It was timed so neatly to get the banknotes up above there. There is nothing left for you—spies! As for Fil-de-Soie, he will be under the daisies in less than a fortnight, even if you were to tell off the whole force to protect him. How much did you give the Michonnette?" he asked of the police officers. "A thousand crowns? Oh you Ninon in decay, Pompadour in tatters, Venus of the graveyard, I was worth more than that! If you had given me warning, you should have had six thousand francs. Ah! you had no suspicion of that, old trafficker in flesh and blood, or I should have had the preference. Yes, I would have given six thousand francs to save myself an inconvenient journey and some loss of money," he said, as they fastened the hand-

— ...y, as I can, that he has
do anything for him?" he as
good there," he said, tapping
trayed any one!—Look you hei
maid, "they are all afraid of ı
of you turns them sick. Rake

He was silent for a momei
lodgers' faces.

"What dolts you are, all of ɔ
convict before? A convict of (
before you, is a man less weak
up his voice against the colossal
as Jean Jacques did, whose pupi
self. In short, I stand here sing
ment and a whole subsidized n
police, and I am a match for the

"Ye gods!" cried the painter,
one might make of him!"

"Look here, you gentleman-in-
gibbet, master of ceremonies to tl
of sombre poetry, given by priso
a good fellow, and tell me if it rea
me. I don't want him to suffer f
not be fair."

But before the chief had time
party returned from

will take me away directly. You have all made my stay among you very agreeable, and I shall look back upon it with gratitude. Receive my adieux, and permit me to send you figs from Provence."

He advanced a step or two, and then turned to look once more at Rastignac.

"Good-bye, Eugène," he said, in a sad and gentle tone, a strange transition from his previous rough and stern manner. "If you should be hard up, I have left you a devoted friend," and, in spite of his shackles, he managed to assume a posture of defence, called, "One, two!" like a fencing-master, and lunged. "If anything goes wrong, apply in that quarter. Man and money, all at your service."

The strange speaker's manner was sufficiently burlesque, so that no one but Rastignac knew that there was a serious meaning underlying the pantomime.

As soon as the police, soldiers, and detectives had left the house, Sylvie, who was rubbing her mistress' temples with vinegar, looked round at the bewildered lodgers.

"Well," said she, "he was a man, he was, for all that."

Her words broke the spell. Every one had been too much excited, too much moved by very various feelings to speak. But now the lodgers began to look at each other, and then all eyes were turned at once on Mlle. Michonneau, a thin, shriveled, dead-alive, mummy-like figure, crouching by the stove; her eyes were downcast, as if she feared that the green eye-shade could not shut out the expression of those faces from her. This figure and the feeling of repulsion she had so long excited were explained all at once. A smothered murmur filled the room; it was so unanimous, that it seemed as if the same feeling of loathing had pitched all the voices in one key. Mlle. Michonneau heard it, and did not stir. It was Bianchon who was the first to move; he bent over his neighbor, and said in a low voice, "If that creature is going to stop here, and have dinner with us, I shall clear out."

In the twinkling of an eye it was clear that every one in the room, save Poiret, was of the medical student's opinion,

— in her ear.

"I have paid beforehand for
right to be here as any one els
look at the boarders.

"Never mind that! we will cl
money back," said Rastignac.

"Monsieur is taking Collin's p
tioning, malignant glance at the
cult to guess why."

Eugène started forward at the
spring upon her and wring her n
depths of treachery that it reveal
lightenment.

"Let her alone!" cried the boa

Rastignac folded his arms and v

"Let us have no more of Mlle.
turning to Mme. Vauquer. "If yo
neau the door, madame, we shall
wherever we go we shall say that t
spies left there. If you do the oth
tongues about the business; for wh
might happen in the best society
the forehead, when they send them
not to let convicts go about Paris
zens, so as to carry on their antics
bugs, which they are."

ment, my dear sir? There is M. Vautrin—— Goodness," she cried, interrupting herself, "I can't help calling him by the name he passed himself off by for an honest man! There is one room to let already, and you want me to turn out two more lodgers in the middle of the season, when no one is moving——"

"Gentlemen, let us take our hats and go and dine at Flicoteaux's in the Place Sorbonne," cried Bianchon.

Mme. Vauquer glanced round, and saw in a moment on which side her interest lay. She waddled across to Mlle. Michonneau.

"Come, now," she said; "you would not be the ruin of my establishment, would you, eh? There's a dear, kind soul. You see what a pass these gentlemen have brought me to; just go up to your room for this evening."

"Never a bit of it!" cried the boarders. "She must go, and go this minute!"

"But the poor lady has had no dinner," said Poiret, with piteous entreaty.

"She can go and dine where she likes," shouted several voices.

"Turn her out, the spy!"

"Turn them both out! Spies!"

"Gentlemen," cried Poiret, his heart swelling with the courage that love gives to the ovine male, "respect the weaker sex."

"Spies are of no sex!" said the painter.

"A precious sexorama!"

"Turn her into the streetorama!"

"Gentlemen, this is not manners! If you turn people out of the house, it ought not to be done so unceremoniously and with no notice at all. We have paid our money, and we are not going," said Poiret, putting on his cap, and taking a chair beside Mlle. Michonneau, with whom Mme. Vauquer was remonstrating.

"Naughty boy!" said the painter, with a comical look; "run away, naughty little boy!"

going:—She is not

"These alternate exclamations,
[illegible] borne out by the beha
[illegible] Mlle. Michonneau to take
[illegible] stipulations, speaking in a l
[illegible] then—"I shall go to Mme. F
threatening look.

"Go where you please, maden
[illegible] who regarded this choice of a
[illegible] an atrocious insult. "Go and
[illegible] wine would give a cat the co
[illegible] nasty."

The boarders stood aside in two
[illegible] word was spoken. Poiret looke
Michonneau, and so artlessly reve
[illegible] whether to go or stay, that
[illegible] being quit of Mlle. Michonneau,
[illegible] of him.

"Hist!—st!—st! Poiret," shoute
I say, Poiret, hallo!" The employé
[illegible] sing:

"Partant pour la Syrie
Le jeune et beau Dr

Mlle. Michonneau made a movement as if to take Poiret's arm, with an appealing glance that he could not resist. The two went out together, the old maid leaning upon him, and there was a burst of applause, followed by peals of laughter.

"Bravo, Poiret!"

"Who would have thought it of old Poiret!"

"Apollo Poiret!"

"Mars Poiret!"

"Intrepid Poiret!"

A messenger came in at that moment with a letter for Mme. Vauquer, who read it through, and collapsed in her chair.

"The house might as well be burned down at once," cried she, "if there are to be any more of these thunderbolts! Young Taillefer died at three o'clock this afternoon. It serves me right for wishing well to those ladies at that poor young man's expense. Mme. Couture and Victorine want me to send their things, because they are going to live with her father. M. Taillefer allows his daughter to keep old Mme. Couture with her as lady companion. Four rooms to let! and five lodgers gone! . . ."

She sat up, and seemed about to burst into tears.

"Bad luck has come to lodge here, I think," she cried.

Once more there came a sound of wheels from the street outside.

"What! another windfall for somebody!" was Sylvie's comment.

But it was Goriot who came in, looking so radiant, so flushed with happiness, that he seemed to have grown young again.

"Goriot in a cab!" cried the boarders; "the world is coming to an end."

The good soul made straight for Eugène, who was standing wrapped in thought in a corner, and laid a hand on the young man's arm.

"Come," he said, with gladness in his eyes.

"Then you haven't heard the news?" said Eugène. "Vau-

carried on Rastignac v
departed in as great a hurry

"Now, let us have dinner
one drew his chair to the tal

"Well, I never," said the
right to-day! The haricot r
will have to eat it, burned as

Mme. Vauquer was so dis
a word as she looked round th
where eighteen should be; but
cheer her. At first the dinne
talked about Vautrin and the c
tion wound round to such top
justice, prison life, and alterati
the laws. They soon wandere
Collin and Victorine and her b
ten of them, but they made nois
there seemed to be more of the
only difference between yesterd
to the fate of others is a matter c
which, on the morrow of a trag
of Paris for a fresh sensation f
and this indifference soon gai
Vauquer herself grew calmer
of hope, and the mouthpiece of

That day had gone by like a
sense of unreality lasted into t
of his energetic

"It was finished this morning! All three of us are going to dine there together, together! Do you understand? I have not dined with my Delphine, my little Delphine, these four years, and I shall have her for a whole evening! We have been at your lodging the whole time since morning. I have been working like a porter in my shirt sleeves, helping to carry in the furniture. Aha! you don't know what pretty ways she has; at table she will look after me, 'Here, papa, just try this, it is nice.' And I shall not be able to eat. Oh, it is a long while since I have been with her in quiet every-day life as we shall have her."

"It really seems as if the world had been turned upside down."

"Upside down?" repeated Father Goriot. "Why, the world has never been so right-side up. I see none but smiling faces in the streets, people who shake hands cordially and embrace each other, people who all look as happy as if they were going to dine with their daughter, and gobble down a nice little dinner that she went with me to order of the chef at the Café des Anglais. But, pshaw! with her beside you gall and wormwood would be as sweet as honey."

"I feel as if I were coming back to life again," said Eugène.

"Why, hurry up there!" cried Father Goriot, letting down the window in front. "Get on faster; I will give you five francs if you get to the place I told you of in ten minutes time."

With this prospect before him the cabman crossed Paris with miraculous celerity.

"How that fellow crawls!" said Father Goriot.

"But where are you taking me?" Eugène asked him.

"To your own house," said Goriot.

The cab stopped in the Rue d'Artois. Father Goriot stepped out first and flung ten francs to the man with the recklessness of a widower returning to bachelor ways.

"Come along upstairs," he said to Rastignac. They crossed a courtyard, and climbed up to the third floor of a new and handsome house. Here they stopped before a door; but be-

fore Goriot could ring, it was opened by Thérèse, Mme. de Nucingen's maid. Eugène found himself in a charming set of chambers; an ante-room, a little drawing-room, a bedroom, and a study, looking out upon a garden. The furniture and the decoration of the little drawing-room were of the most daintily charming description, the room was full of soft light, and Delphine rose up from a low chair by the fire and stood before him. She set her fire-screen down on the chimney-piece, and spoke with tenderness in every tone of her voice.

"So we had to go in search of you, sir, you who are so slow to understand!"

Thérèse left the room. The student took Delphine in his arms and held her in a tight clasp, his eyes filled with tears of joy. This last contrast between his present surroundings and the scenes he had just witnessed was too much for Rastignac's over-wrought nerves, after the day's strain and ex-

"Oh! so I am nobody, I suppose," growled the father.

"You know quite well that 'we' means you."

"Ah! that is what I wanted. You will not mind me, will you? I shall go and come like a good fairy who makes himself felt everywhere without being seen, shall I not? Eh, Delphinette, Ninette, Dedel—was it not a good idea of mine to say to you, 'There are some nice rooms to let in the Rue d'Artois; let us furnish them for him?' And she would not hear of it! Ah! your happiness has been all my doing. I am the author of your happiness and of your existence. Fathers must always be giving if they would be happy themselves; always giving—they would not be fathers else."

"Was that how it happened?" asked Eugène.

"Yes. She would not listen to me. She was afraid that people would talk, as if the rubbish that they say about you were to be compared with happiness! Why, all women dream of doing what she has done——"

Father Goriot found himself without an audience, for Mme. de Nucingen had led Rastignac into the study; he heard a kiss given and taken, low though the sound was.

The study was furnished as elegantly as the other rooms, and nothing was wanting there.

"Have we guessed your wishes rightly?" she asked, as they returned to the drawing-room for dinner.

"Yes," he said, "only too well, alas! For all this luxury so well carried out, this realization of pleasant dreams, the elegance that satisfies all the romantic fancies of youth, appeals to me so strongly that I cannot but feel that it is my rightful possession, but I cannot accept it from you, and I am too poor as yet to——"

"Ah! ah! you say me nay already," she said with arch imperiousness, and a charming little pout of the lips, a woman's way of laughing away scruples.

But Eugène had submitted so lately to that solemn self-questioning, and Vautrin's arrest had so plainly shown him the depths of the pit that lay ready to his feet, that the instincts of generosity and honor had been strengthened in him,

and he could not allow himself to be coaxed into abandoning his high-minded determinations. Profound melancholy filled his mind.

"Do you really mean to refuse?" said Mme. de Nucingen. "And do you know what such a refusal means? That you are not sure of yourself, that you do not dare to bind yourself to me. Are you really afraid of betraying my affection? If you love me, if I—love you, why should you shrink back from such a slight obligation? If you but knew what a pleasure it has been to see after all the arrangements of this bachelor establishment, you would not hesitate any longer, you would ask me to forgive you for your hesitation. I had some money that belonged to you, and I have made good use of it, that is all. You mean this for magnanimity, but it is very little of you. You are asking me for far more than this. . . . Ah!" she cried, as Eugène's passionate glance

garret must be if it is like papa's room! See, dinner is waiting all this time. Do you want to make me unhappy?—Why don't you answer?" she said, shaking his hand. "*Mon Dieu!* papa, make up his mind for him, or I will go away and never see him any more."

"I will make up your mind," said Goriot, coming down from the clouds. "Now, my dear M. Eugène, the next thing is to borrow money of the Jews, isn't it?"

"There is positively no help for it," said Eugène.

"All right, I will give you credit," said the other, drawing out a cheap leather pocket-book, much the worse for wear. "I have turned Jew myself; I paid for everything; here are the invoices. You do not owe a penny for anything here. It did not come to very much—five thousand francs at most, and I am going to lend you the money myself. I am not a woman—you cannot refuse me. You shall give me a receipt on a scrap of paper, and you can return it some time or other."

Delphine and Eugène looked at each other in amazement, tears sprang to their eyes. Rastignac held out his hand and grasped Goriot's warmly.

"Well, what is all this about? Are you not my children?"

"Oh! my poor father," said Mme. de Nucingen, "how did you do it?"

"Ah! now you ask me. When I made up my mind to move him nearer to you, and saw you buying things as if they were wedding presents, I said to myself, 'She will never be able to pay for them.' The attorney says that those law proceedings will last quite six months before your husband can be made to disgorge your fortune. Well and good. I sold out my property in the funds that brought in thirteen hundred and fifty livres a year, and bought a safe annuity of twelve hundred francs a year for fifteen thousand francs. Then I paid your tradesmen out of the rest of the capital. As for me, children, I have a room upstairs for which I pay fifty crowns a year; I can live like a prince on two francs a day, and still have something left over. I shall not have to spend anything much on clothes, for I never wear anything out.

"Why, children, why, Delphi
not felt his daughter's heart b
years, "do you want me to die
break! Come, Monsieur Eug
And the old man strained her
and passionate force that she cri

"Oh! you are hurting me!" sl

"I am hurting you!" He gr
pain expressed in his face seeme
humanity to know. The agony
can only be compared with the n
of the palette who have left for u
of an agony suffered for a whole w
Father Goriot pressed his lips ve
that his fingers had grasped too r

"Oh! no, no," he cried. "I ha
and his smile seemed to repeat the
me with that cry just now.—The t
that," he said in her ear, with anc
to deceive him about it, or he wou

Eugène sat dumb with amazem
inexhaustible love; he gazed at G
the artless admiration which shon

Father Goriot. "Yes, the little thing was in love with you, and now that her brother is dead she is as rich as Crœsus."

"Oh! why did you tell her?" cried Rastignac

"Eugène," Delphine said in his ear, "I have one regret now this evening. Ah! how I will love you! and for ever!"

"This is the happiest day I have had since you two were married!" cried Goriot. "God may send me any suffering, so long as I do not suffer through you, and I can still say, 'In this short month of February I had more happiness than other men have in their whole lives.'—Look at me, Fifine!" he said to his daughter. "She is very beautiful, is she not? Tell me, now, have you seen many women with that pretty soft color—that little dimple of hers? No, I thought not. Ah, well, and but for me this lovely woman would never have been. And very soon happiness will make her a thousand times lovelier, happiness through you. I could give up my place in heaven to you, neighbor, if needs be, and go down to hell instead. Come, let us have dinner," he added, scarcely knowing what he said, "everything is ours."

"Poor dear father!"

He rose and went over to her, and took her face in his hands, and set a kiss on the plaits of hair. "If you only knew, little one, how happy you can make me—how little it takes to make me happy! Will you come and see me sometimes? I shall be just above, so it is only a step. Promise me, say that you will!"

"Yes, dear father."

"Say it again."

"Yes, I will, my kind father."

"Hush! hush! I should make you say it a hundred times over if I followed my own wishes. Let us have dinner."

The three behaved like children that evening, and Father Goriot's spirits were certainly not the least wild. He lay at his daughter's feet, kissed them, gazed into her eyes, rubbed his head against her dress; in short, no young lover could have been more extravagant or more tender.

"You see!" Delphine said with a look at Eugène, "so long

the Italiens."

"I shall go to the pit," said l

It was midnight. Mme. de N ing for her, and Father Goriot ai the Maison Vauquer, talking of their talk till there grew up a cu violent passions. Eugène coul father's self-less love was deeper own. For this worshiper Del fair, and her father's adoration d past as well as a future of love.

They found Mme. Vauquer by Christophe to keep her company like Marius among the ruins of the two lodgers that yet remained lot with the sympathetic Sylvie. corded in Byron's poem are und sheer force of truth they fall far from the depths.

"Only three cups of coffee in t dear! to have your house emptied break your heart. What is life, Nothing at all. Just think of it!

shall have to live on potatoes now, and Christophe will have to go!"

The Savoyard, who was fast asleep, suddenly woke up at this, and said, "Madame," questioningly.

"Poor fellow!" said Sylvie, "he is like a dog."

"In the dead season, too! Nobody is moving now. I would like to know where the lodgers are to drop down from. It drives me distracted. And that old witch of a Michonneau goes and takes Poiret with her! What can she have done to him to make him so fond of her? He runs about after her like a little dog."

"Lord!" said Sylvie, flinging up her head, "those old maids are up to all sorts of tricks."

"There's that poor M. Vautrin that they made out to be a convict," the widow went on. "Well, you know that is too much for me, Sylvie; I can't bring myself to believe it. Such a lively man as he was, and paid fifteen francs a month for his coffee of an evening, paid you every penny on the nail too."

"And open-handed he was!" said Christophe.

"There is some mistake," said Sylvie.

"Why, no there isn't! he said so himself!" said Mme. Vauquer. "And to think that all these things have happened in my house, and in a quarter where you never see a cat go by. On my word as an honest woman, it's like a dream. For, look here, we saw Louis XVI. meet with his mishap; we saw the fall of the Emperor; and we saw him come back and fall again; there was nothing out of the way in all that, but lodging-houses are not liable to revolutions. You can do without a king, but you must eat all the same; and so long as a decent woman, a de Conflans born and bred, will give you all sorts of good things for dinner, nothing short of the end of the world ought to—but there, it is the end of the world, that is just what it is!"

"And to think that Mlle. Michonneau who made all this mischief is to have a thousand crowns a year for it, so I hear," cried Sylvie.

"Don't speak of her, she is a wicked woman!" said Mme. Vauquer. "She is going to the Buneaud, who charges less than cost. But the Buneaud is capable of anything; she must have done frightful things, robbed and murdered people in her time. *She* ought to be put in jail for life instead of that poor dear——"

Eugène and Goriot rang the door-bell at that moment.

"Ah! here are my two faithful lodgers," said the widow, sighing.

But the two faithful lodgers, who retained but shadowy recollections of the misfortunes of their lodging-house, announced to their hostess without more ado that they were about to remove to the Chaussée d'Antin.

"Sylvie!" cried the widow, "this is the last straw.—Gentlemen, this will be the death of me! It has quite upset me! There's a weight on my chest! I am ten years older for this day! Upon my word, I shall go out of my senses! And what is to be done with the haricots?—Oh, well, if I am to be left here all by myself, you shall go to-morrow, Christophe.—Good-night, gentlemen," and she went.

take his (Rastignac's) place; that the official from the Muséum had often expressed a desire to have Mme. Couture's rooms; and that in a very few days her household would be on the old footing.

"God send it may, my dear sir! but bad luck has come to lodge here. There'll be a death in the house before ten days are out, you'll see," and she gave a lugubrious look round the dining-room. "Whose turn will it be, I wonder?"

"It is just as well that we are moving out," said Eugène to Father Goriot in a low voice.

"Madame," said Sylvie, running in with a scared face, "I have not seen Mistigris these three days."

"Ah! well, if my cat is dead, if *he* has gone and left us, I——"

The poor woman could not finish her sentence; she clasped her hands and hid her face on the back of her armchair, quite overcome by this dreadful portent.

By twelve o'clock, when the postman reaches that quarter, Eugène received a letter. The dainty envelope bore the Beauséant arms on the seal, and contained an invitation to the Vicomtesse's great ball, which had been talked of in Paris for a month. A little note for Eugène was slipped in with the card.

"I think, monsieur, that you will undertake with pleasure to interpret my sentiments to Mme. de Nucingen, so I am sending the card for which you asked me to you. I shall be delighted to make the acquaintance of Mme. de Restaud's sister. Pray introduce that charming lady to me, and do not let her monopolize all your affection, for you owe me not a little in return for mine.

"VICOMTESSE DE BEAUSÉANT."

"Well," said Eugène to himself, as he read the note a second time, "Mme. de Beauséant says pretty plainly that she does not want the Baron de Nucingen."

He went to Delphine at once in his joy. He had procured

[illegible] men nor women are th
by which people seek to throw a
parade a fine affectation of dis
ments. In this country within
required of a woman that she s
the soul; she knows perfectly w
obligations to discharge, that sl
demands of a vanity that enters i
organism called society. Love, i
and by its very nature, a vainglo
tatious, thriftless charlatan. If a
there was not a woman but envi
reckless devotion of passion that
tear the priceless ruffles at his w
entry of a Duc de Vermandois int
expect of the rest of society? Y
wealth and rank; nay, you must, i
these, for the more incense you bri
shrine of the god, the more favora
shiper. Love is a religion, and h
of things be more costly than thos
the Spoiler stays for a moment, a
urchin of the streets, his course m
that he has made [illegible]

conian laws of the Parisian code, they are solitary examples. Such souls live so far out of the main current that they are not borne away by the doctrines of society; they dwell beside some clear spring of everflowing water, without seeking to leave the green shade; happy to listen to the echoes of the infinite in everything around them and in their own souls, waiting in patience to take their flight for heaven, while they look with pity upon those of earth.

Rastignac, like most young men who have been early impressed by the circumstance of power and grandeur, meant to enter the lists fully armed; the burning ambition of conquest possessed him already; perhaps he was conscious of his powers, but as yet he knew neither the end to which his ambition was to be directed, nor the means of attaining it. In default of the pure and sacred love that fills a life, ambition may become something very noble, subduing to itself every thought of personal interest, and setting as the end—the greatness, not of one man, but of a whole nation.

But the student had not yet reached the time of life when a man surveys the whole course of existence and judges it soberly. Hitherto he had scarcely so much as shaken off the spell of the fresh and gracious influences that envelop a childhood in the country, like green leaves and grass. He had hesitated on the brink of the Parisian Rubicon, and in spite of the prickings of ambition, he still clung to a lingering tradition of an old ideal—the peaceful life of the noble in his château. But yesterday evening, at the sight of his rooms, those scruples had vanished. He had learned what it was to enjoy the material advantages of fortune, as he had already enjoyed the social advantages of birth; he ceased to be a provincial from that moment, and slipped naturally and easily into a position which opened up a prospect of a brilliant future.

So, as he waited for Delphine, in the pretty boudoir, where he felt that he had a certain right to be, he felt himself so far away from the Rastignac who came back to Paris a year ago, that, turning some power of inner vision upon this lat-

"Guess what I bring for y
beside her. He took possessi
Mme. de Nucingen gave a
She turned to Eugène; ther
flung her arms about his neck
a frenzy of gratified vanity.
"And I owe this happiness t
the more intimate word in hi
dressing-room, let us be prud
I may call it so, when it comes
more than a triumph for self-l
to introduce me into that set.
to you to be frivolous, petty, s
remember, my friend, that I am
and that if I long more than
Faubourg Saint-Germain, it i
there."
"Mme. de Beauséant's note s
she does not expect to see the *B*
don't you think so?" said Eugè
"Why, yes," said the Barone
"Those women have a talent f
consequence. I shall

had been discussing her at the club. Great heavens! on what does a woman's character and the honor of a whole family depend! I feel that I am nearly touched and wounded in my poor sister. According to some people, M. de Trailles must have put his name to bills for a hundred thousand francs, nearly all of them are overdue, and proceedings are threatened. In this predicament, it seems that my sister sold her diamonds to a Jew—the beautiful diamonds that belonged to her husband's mother, Mme. de Restaud the elder,—you have seen her wearing them. In fact, nothing else has been talked about for the last two days. So I can see that Anastasie is sure to come to Mme. de Beauséant's ball in tissue of gold, and ablaze with diamonds, to draw all eyes upon her; and I will not be outshone. She has tried to eclipse me all her life; she has never been kind to me, and I have helped her so often, and always had money for her when she had none.—But never mind other people now, to-day I mean to be perfectly happy."

At one o'clock that morning Eugène was still with Mme. de Nucingen. In the midst of their lovers' farewell, a farewell full of hope of bliss to come, she said in a troubled voice, "I am very fearful, superstitious. Give what name you like to my presentiments, but I am afraid that my happiness will be paid for by some horrible catastrophe."

"Child!" said Eugène.

"Ah! have we changed places, and am I the child to-night?" she asked, laughingly.

Eugène went back to the Maison Vauquer, never doubting but that he should leave it for good on the morrow; and on the way he fell to dreaming the bright dreams of youth, when the cup of happiness has left its sweetness on the lips.

"Well?" cried Goriot, as Rastignac passed by his door.

"Yes," said Eugène; "I will tell you everything to-morrow."

"Everything, will you not?" cried the old man. "Go to bed. To-morrow our happy life will begin."

Next day, Goriot and Rastignac were ready to leave the

it so happened that Eugèn
his neighbor. At breakfast tim
intend the removal of his goo
him in the Rue d'Artois at
name had been called early on
and he had gone back at once t
viève. No one had seen him cc
find a porter, and the mistress
Eugène had thought to pay her
if he left this, Goriot in his zeal
As it was, Eugène went up to
had been forgotten, and blessec
the blank bill bearing Vautrin's
where he had carelessly thrown
repaid the amount. There was n
about to tear it into little pieces,
ing in Goriot's room, and the
made no more noise, and stood
she should have no secrets from
words, the conversation between
so strange and interesting that i

"Ah! thank heaven that you tl
an account of the money settled
ruined, father. Is it safe to tall

"Yes, there is no one in the ho

"What is th

thing so important happened that you must come here about it? In a few minutes we should have been in the Rue d'Artois."

"Eh! does one think what one is doing after a catastrophe? It has turned my head. Your attorney has found out the state of things now, but it was bound to come out sooner or later. We shall want your long business experience; and I come to you like a drowning man who catches at a branch. When M. Derville found that Nucingen was throwing all sorts of difficulties in his way, he threatened him with proceedings, and told him plainly that he would soon obtain an order from the President of the Tribunal. So Nucingen came to my room this morning, and asked if I meant to ruin us both. I told him that I knew nothing whatever about it, that I had a fortune, and ought to be put into possession of my fortune, and that my attorney was acting for me in the matter; I said again that I knew absolutely nothing about it, and could not possibly go into the subject with him. Wasn't that what you told me to tell him?"

"Yes, quite right," answered Goriot.

"Well, then," Delphine continued, "he told me all about his affairs. He had just invested all his capital and mine in business speculations; they have only just been started, and very large sums of money are locked up. If I were to compel him to refund my dowry now, he would be forced to file his petition; but if I will wait a year, he undertakes, on his honor, to double or treble my fortune, by investing it in building land, and I shall be mistress at last of the whole of my property. He was speaking the truth, father dear; he frightened me! He asked my pardon for his conduct; he has given me my liberty; I am free to act as I please on condition that I leave him to carry on my business in my name. To prove his sincerity, he promised that M. Derville might inspect the accounts as often as I pleased, so that I might be assured that everything was being conducted properly. In short, he put himself into my power, bound hand and foot. He wishes the present arrangements as to the expenses of

Do you really believe that
her father. "It was all got up
to do with Germans in the v
straightforward they are pretty
their simplicity and frankness
bugs as well, they are the worst
is taking advantage of you. A
to bear on him he shams dead; l
ter under your name than in h
tage of the position to secure
business. He is as sharp as he
lot! No, no; I am not going
without a penny when I go to P
thing about business still. He h
lation, he says; very well then, tl
it—bills, receipts, papers of so
them, and come to an arrangeme
the most promising of his specul
own risk, and have the securities
they shall represent the separate
wife of the Baron de Nucingen
take us for idiots? Does he ima
idea of your being without fortu
might have? I would not

nched and saved all my life for you, my darlings, for you so made the toil and every burden borne for you seem light; nd now, my fortune, my whole life, is to vanish in smoke! should die raving mad if I believed a word of it. By all hat's holiest in heaven and earth, we will have this cleared p at once; go through the books, have the whole business oked thoroughly into! I will not sleep, nor rest, nor eat ntil I have satisfied myself that all your fortune is in existnce. Your money is settled upon you, God be thanked! and, ckily, your attorney, Maître Derville, is an honest man. lood Lord! you shall have your snug little million, your fifty housand francs a year, as long as you live, or I will raise a acket in Paris, I will so! If the Tribunals put upon us, I rill appeal to the Chambers. If I knew that you were well nd comfortably off as far as money is concerned, that hought would keep me easy in spite of bad health and roubles. Money? why, it is life! Money does everything. That great dolt of an Alsatian shall sing to another tune! ook here, Delphine, don't give way, don't make a concesion of half a quarter of a farthing to that fathead, who has round you down and made you miserable. If he can't do rithout you, we will give him a good cudgeling, and keep im in order. Great heavens! my brain is on fire; it is as if here were something redhot inside my head. My Delphine ying on straw! You! my Fifine! Good gracious! Where re my gloves? Come, let us go at once; I mean to see everyhing with my own eyes—books, cash, and correspondence, he whole business. I shall have no peace until I know for ertain that your fortune is secure."

"Oh! father dear, be careful how you set about it! If here is the least hint of vengeance in the business, if you how yourself openly hostile, it will be all over with me. He nows whom he has to deal with; he thinks it quite natural hat if you put the idea into my head, I should be uneasy bout my money; but I swear to you that he has it in his own ands, and that he had meant to keep it. He is just the nan to abscond with all the money and leave us in the lurch,

the scoundrel! He knows quite well that I will not dishonor the name I bear by bringing him into a court of law. His position is strong and weak at the same time. If we drive him to despair, I am lost."

"Why, then, the man is a rogue?"

"Well, yes, father," she said, flinging herself into a chair. "I wanted to keep it from you to spare your feelings," and she burst into tears; "I did not want you to know that you had married me to such a man as he is. He is just the same in private life—body and soul and conscience—the same through and through—hideous! I hate him; I despise him! Yes, after all that that despicable Nucingen has told me, I cannot respect him any longer. A man capable of mixing himself up in such affairs, and of talking about them to me as he did, without the slightest scruple,—it is because I have read him through and through that I am afraid of him. He, my husband, frankly proposed to give me my liberty, and do you know what that means? It means that if things turn out badly for him, I am to play into his hands, and be his stalking-horse."

buys up land in his own name, then he finds men of straw to run up houses upon it. These men make a bargain with a contractor to build the houses, paying them by bills at long dates; then in consideration of a small sum they leave my husband in possession of the houses, and finally slip through the fingers of the deluded contractors by going into bankruptcy. The name of the firm of Nucingen has been used to dazzle the poor contractors. I saw that. I noticed, too, that Nucingen had sent bills for large amounts to Amsterdam, London, Naples, and Vienna, in order to prove if necessary that large sums had been paid away by the firm. How could we get possession of those bills?"

Eugène heard a dull thud on the floor; Father Goriot must have fallen on his knees.

"Great heavens! what have I done to you? Bound my daughter to this scoundrel who does as he likes with her!—Oh! my child, my child! forgive me!" cried the old man.

"Yes, if I am in the depths of despair, perhaps you are to blame," said Delphine. "We have so little sense when we marry! What do we know of the world, of business, or men, or life? Our fathers should think for us! Father dear, I am not blaming you in the least, forgive me for what I said. This is all my own fault. Nay, do not cry, papa," she said, kissing him.

"Do not you cry either, my little Delphine. Look up and let me kiss away the tears. There! I shall find my wits and unravel this skein of your husband's winding."

"No, let me do that; I shall be able to manage him. He is fond of me, well and good; I shall use my influence to make him invest my money as soon as possible in landed property in my own name. Very likely I could get him to buy back Nucingen in Alsace in my name; that has always been a pet idea of his. Still, come to-morrow and go through the books, and look into the business. M. Derville knows little of mercantile matters. No, not to-morrow though. I do not want to be upset. Mme. de Beauséant's ball will be the day after to-morrow, and I must keep quiet, so as to look my best and

freshest, and do honor to my dear Eugène! . . . Come, let us see his room."

But as she spoke a carriage stopped in the Rue Neuve-Sainte-Geneviève, and the sound of Mme. de Restaud's voice came from the staircase. "Is my father in?" she asked of Sylvie.

This accident was luckily timed for Eugène, whose one idea had been to throw himself down on the bed and pretend to be asleep.

"Oh, father, have you heard about Anastasie?" said Delphine, when she heard her sister speak. "It looks as though some strange things had happened in that family."

"What sort of things?" asked Goriot. "This is like to be the death of me. My poor head will not stand a double misfortune."

"Good-morning, father," said the Countess from the threshold. "Oh! Delphine, are you here?"

Mme. de Restaud seemed taken aback by her sister's presence.

"Good-morning, Nasie," said the Baroness. "What is there

on, stirring the smouldering fire, "come nearer, both of you. It is cold. What is it, Nasie? Be quick and tell me, this is enough to——"

"Well, then, my husband knows everything," said the Countess. "Just imagine it; do you remember, father, that bill of Maxime's some time ago? Well, that was not the first. I had paid ever so many before that. About the beginning of January M. de Trailles seemed very much troubled. He said nothing to me; but it is so easy to read the hearts of those you love, a mere trifle is enough; and then you feel things instinctively. Indeed, he was more tender and affectionate than ever, and I was happier than I had ever been before. Poor Maxime! in himself he was really saying good-bye to me, so he has told me since; he meant to blow his brains out! At last I worried him so, and begged and implored so hard; for two hours I knelt at his knees and prayed and entreated, and at last he told me—that he owed a hundred thousand francs. Oh! papa! a hundred thousand francs! I was beside myself! You had not the money, I knew; I had eaten up all that you had——"

"No," said Goriot; "I could not have got it for you unless I had stolen it. But I would have done that for you, Nasie! I will do it yet."

The words came from him like a sob, a hoarse sound like the death rattle of a dying man; it seemed indeed like the agony of death when the father's love was powerless. There was a pause, and neither of the sisters spoke. It must have been selfishness indeed that could hear unmoved that cry of anguish that, like a pebble thrown over a precipice, revealed the depths of his despair.

"I found the money, father, by selling what was not mine to sell," and the Countess burst into tears.

Delphine was touched; she laid her head on her sister's shoulder, and cried too.

"Then it is all true," she said.

Anastasie bowed her head. Mme. de Nucingen flung her arms about her, kissed her tenderly, and held her sister to her heart.

Come to me and pour out your griefs to me; my heart is large enough to hold them all. Oh! you might rend my heart in pieces, and every fragment would make a father's heart. If only I could bear all your sorrows for you! . . . Ah! you were so happy when you were little and still with me. . . ."

"We have never been happy since," said Delphine. "Where are the old days when we slid down the sacks in the great granary?"

"That is not all, father," said Anastasie in Goriot's ear. The old man gave a startled shudder. "The diamonds only sold for a hundred thousand francs. Maxime is hard pressed. There are twelve thousand francs still to pay. He has given me his word that he will be steady and give up play in future. His love is all that I have left in the world. I have paid such a fearful price for it that I shall die if I lose him now. I have sacrificed my fortune, my honor, my peace of mind, and my children for him. Oh! do something, so that at the least Maxime may be at large and live undisgraced in the world, where he will assuredly make a career for himself. Some-

"I see how it is," said the Countess. "Rooms for M. de Rastignac. Poor Delphine, take warning by me!"

"M. de Rastignac is incapable of ruining the woman he loves, dear."

"Thanks! Delphine. I thought you would have been kinder to me in my troubles, but you never did love me."

"Yes, yes, she loves you, Nasie," cried Goriot; "she was saying so only just now. We were talking about you, and she insisted that you were beautiful, and that she herself was only pretty!"

"Pretty!" said the Countess. "She is as hard as a marble statue."

"And if I am?" cried Delphine, flushing up, "how have you treated me? You would not recognize me; you closed the doors of every house against me; you have never let an opportunity of mortifying me slip by. And when did I come, as you were always doing, to drain our poor father, a thousand francs at a time, till he is left as you see him now? That is all your doing, sister! I myself have seen my father as often as I could. I have not turned him out of the house, and then come and fawned upon him when I wanted money. I did not so much as know that he had spent those twelve thousand francs on me. I am economical, as you know; and when papa has made me presents, it has never been because I came and begged for them."

"You were better off than I. M. de Marsay was rich, as you have reason to know. You always were as slippery as gold. Good-bye; I have neither sister nor——"

"Oh! hush, hush, Nasie!" cried her father.

"Nobody else would repeat what everybody has ceased to believe. You are an unnatural sister!" cried Delphine.

"Oh, children, children! hush! hush! or I will kill myself before your eyes."

"There, Nasie, I forgive you," said Mme. de Nucingen; "you are very unhappy. But I am kinder than you are. How could you say *that* just when I was ready to do anything in the world to help you, even to be reconciled with my hus-

than two hundred thousa
Nucingen.

"Delphine!" cried the C
sister.

"I shall tell you the truth
slander me," said the Baron

"Delphine! you are a——

Father Goriot sprang betwe
hand, and laid his own over h

"Good heavens, father! W
this morning?" said Anastasi

"Ah! well, yes, I ought not
poor father, wiping his hands
been packing up my things; I
coming to see me."

He was glad that he had dra
self.

"Ah!" he sighed, as he sa
broken my heart between you.
feels as if it were on fire. Be
each other! This will be the de
come, be sensible; you are both
he added, looking through his

her to forgive you—just to please me," he said in her ear. "She is more miserable than you are. Come now, Dedel."

"Poor Nasie!" said Delphine, alarmed at the wild extravagant grief in her father's face, "I was in the wrong, kiss me——"

"Ah! that is like balm to my heart," cried Father Goriot. "But how are we to find twelve thousand francs? I might offer myself as a substitute in the army——"

"Oh! father dear!" they both cried, flinging their arms about him. "No, no!"

"God reward you for the thought. We are not worth it, are we, Nasie?" asked Delphine.

"And besides, father dear, it would only be a drop in the bucket," observed the Countess.

"But is flesh and blood worth nothing?" cried the old man in his despair. "I would give body and soul to save you, Nasie. I would do a murder for the man who would rescue you. I would do, as Vautrin did, go to the hulks, go——" he stopped as if struck by a thunderbolt, and put both hands to his head. "Nothing left!" he cried, tearing his hair. "If I only knew of a way to steal money, but it is so hard to do it, and then you can't set to work by yourself, and it takes time to rob a bank. Yes, it is time I was dead; there is nothing left me to do but to die. I am no good in the world; I am no longer a father! No. She has come to me in her extremity, and, wretch that I am, I have nothing to give her. Ah! you put your money into a life annuity, old scoundrel; and had you not daughters? You did not love them. Die, die in a ditch, like the dog that you are! Yes, I am worse than a dog; a beast would not have done as I have done! Oh! my head . . . it throbs as if it would burst."

"Papa!" cried both the young women at once, "do, pray, be reasonable!" and they clung to him to prevent him from dashing his head against the wall. There was a sound of sobbing.

Eugène, greatly alarmed, took the bill that bore Vautrin's signature, saw that the stamp would suffice for a larger sum,

altered the figures, made it into a regular bill for twelve thousand francs, payable to Goriot's order, and went to his neighbor's room.

"Here is the money, madame," he said, handing the piece of paper to her. "I was asleep; your conversation awoke me, and by this means I learned all that I owed to M. Goriot. This bill can be discounted, and I shall meet it punctually at the due date."

The Countess stood motionless and speechless, but she held the bill in her fingers.

"Delphine," she said, with a white face, and her whole frame quivering with indignation, anger, and rage, "I forgave you everything; God is my witness that I forgave you, but I cannot forgive this! So this gentleman was there all the time, and you knew it! Your petty spite has led you to wreak your vengeance on me by betraying my secrets, my life, my children's lives, my shame, my honor! There, you are nothing to me any longer. I hate you. I will do all that I can to injure you. I will . . ."

Anger paralyzed her; the words died in her dry parched throat.

"Why, he is my son, my child; he is your brother, your preserver!" cried Goriot. "Kiss his hand, Nasie! Stay, I will embrace him myself," he said, straining Eugène to his breast in a frenzied clasp. "Oh my boy! I will be more than

"Sir? . . ." she said, doubt and inquiry in her face, tone, and bearing; she took no notice now of her father nor of Delphine, who was hastily unfastening his waistcoat.

"Madame," said Eugène, answering the question before it was asked, "I will meet the bill, and keep silence about it."

"You have killed our father, Nasie!" said Delphine, pointing to Goriot, who lay unconscious on the bed. The Countess fled.

"I freely forgive her," said the old man, opening his eyes; "her position is horrible; it would turn an older head than hers. Comfort Nasie, and be nice to her, Delphine; promise it to your poor father before he dies," he asked, holding Delphine's hand in a convulsive clasp.

"Oh! what ails you, father?" she cried in real alarm.

"Nothing, nothing," said Goriot; "it will go off. There is something heavy pressing on my forehead, a little headache. . . . Ah! poor Nasie, what a life lies before her!"

Just as he spoke, the Countess came back again and flung herself on her knees before him. "Forgive me!" she cried.

"Come," said her father, "you are hurting me still more."

"Monsieur," the Countess said, turning to Rastignac, "misery made me unjust to you. You will be a brother to me, will you not?" and she held out her hand. Her eyes were full of tears as she spoke.

"Nasie," cried Delphine, flinging her arms round her sister, "my little Nasie, let us forget and forgive."

"No, no," cried Nasie; "I shall never forget!"

"Dear angels," cried Goriot, "it is as if a dark curtain over my eyes had been raised; your voices have called me back to life. Kiss each other once more. Well, now, Nasie, that bill will save you, won't it?"

"I hope so. I say, papa, will you write your name on it?"

"There! how stupid of me to forget that! But I am not feeling at all well, Nasie, so you must not remember it against me. Send and let me know as soon as you are out of your strait. No, I will go to you. No, after all, I will not go; I might meet your husband, and I should kill him on

ne answered, raising his eye:
thoughts that he did not ve
"Yes. She is always acti
"How do you feel now, d
tignac.
"I should like to go to sle
Eugène helped him to bed
side, holding his hand until h
"This evening at the Italie
you can let me know how he
this place, monsieur. Let us
frightful!" she cried on the t
worse lodged than our father.
well. I would love you more i
boy, if you are to succeed in lif
ing twelve thousand francs out
Comte de Trailles is a confirm
her eyes to it. He would ha
francs in the same way that he
A groan from the next room
bedside; to all appearance he
caught the words, "They are r
awake or sleeping, the tone in
to his

"How are you now?" she asked.

"Quite comfortable. Do not worry about me; I shall get up presently. Don't stay with me, children; go, go and be happy."

Eugène went back with Delphine as far as her door; but he was not easy about Goriot, and would not stay to dinner, as she proposed. He wanted to be back at the Maison Vauquer. Father Goriot had left his room, and was just sitting down to dinner as he came in. Bianchon had placed himself where he could watch the old man carefully; and when the old vermicelli maker took up his square of bread and smelled it to find out the quality of the flour, the medical student, studying him closely, saw that the action was purely mechanical, and shook his head.

"Just come and sit over here, hospitaller of Cochin," said Eugène.

Bianchon went the more willingly because his change of place brought him next to the old lodger.

"What is wrong with him?" asked Rastignac.

"It is all up with him, or I am much mistaken! Something very extraordinary must have taken place; he looks to me as if he were in imminent danger of serous apoplexy. The lower part of his face is composed enough, but the upper part is drawn and distorted. Then there is that peculiar look about the eyes that indicates an effusion of serum in the brain; they look as though they were covered with a film of fine dust, do you notice? I shall know more about it by to-morrow morning."

"Is there any cure for it?"

"None. It might be possible to stave death off for a time if a way could be found of setting up a reaction in the lower extremities; but if the symptoms do not abate by to-morrow evening, it will be all over with him, poor old fellow! Do you know what has happened to bring this on? There must have been some violent shock, and his mind has given way."

"Yes, there was," said Rastignac, remembering how the

not live if your affection di
troubles that I should once hav
this moment I have but one fe
—to lose the love that has mad
thing else is as nothing to m
care for nothing else, for you
feel glad to be rich, it is for y
said, I think of my lover bef
why? I cannot tell you, but all
gave me a heart, but you have
world may condemn me; what
quitted in your eyes, for you ha
for the faults which a tyrannous
for you! Do you think me an
no, no one could help loving suc
But how could I hide the ine
miserable marriages from him?
marry when we did? Was it n
and foresee for us? To-day I
we do, but how can it be helpe
him, we could not comfort him
tion would give him more pain
complaints and upbraidings. T
everything

selfish and self-absorbed, frivolous and shallow; yet of all women, when they love, they sacrifice their personal feelings to their passion; they rise but so much the higher for all the pettiness overcome in their nature, and become sublime. Then Eugène was struck by the profound discernment and insight displayed by this woman in judging of natural affection, when a privileged affection had separated and set her at a distance apart. Mme. de Nucingen was piqued by the silence.

"What are you thinking about?" she asked.

"I am thinking about what you said just now. Hitherto I have always felt sure that I cared far more for you than you did for me."

She smiled, and would not give way to the happiness she felt, lest their talk should exceed the conventional limits of propriety. She had never heard the vibrating tones of a sincere and youthful love; a few more words, and she feared for her self-control.

"Eugène," she said, changing the conversation, "I wonder whether you know what has been happening? All Paris will go to Mme. de Beauséant's to-morrow. The Rochefides and the Marquis d'Ajuda have agreed to keep the matter a profound secret, but to-morrow the king will sign the marriage-contract, and your poor cousin the Vicomtesse knows nothing of it as yet. She cannot put off her ball, and the Marquis will not be there. People are wondering what will happen?"

"The world laughs at baseness and connives at it. But this will kill Mme. de Beauséant."

"Oh, no," said Delphine, smiling, "you do not know that kind of woman. Why, all Paris will be there, and so shall I; I ought to go there for your sake."

"Perhaps, after all, it is one of those absurd reports that people set in circulation here."

"We shall know the truth to-morrow."

Eugène did not return to the Maison Vauquer. He could not forego the pleasure of occupying his new rooms in the

[illegible] yesterday evening he had been obliged to leave [illegible] after midnight, but that night it was Delphine [illegible] with him until two o'clock in the morning. He [illegible] waited for Mme. de Nucingen, who came about [illegible] with him. Youth snatches eagerly at these [illegible] of happiness, and Eugène had almost forgotten [illegible] existence. The pretty things that surrounded him [illegible] familiar; this domestication in itself was one [illegible] for him, and Mme. de Nucingen was there to [illegible] it all by her presence. It was four o'clock before they [illegible] of Goriot, and of how he had looked forward to the [illegible] in that house. Eugène said that the old man ought to [illegible] at once, lest he should grow too ill to move. He [illegible] Delphine, and hurried back to the lodging-house. Neither Father Goriot nor young Bianchon was in the dining-room with the others.

"Aha!" said the painter as Eugène came in, "Father Goriot has broken down at last. Bianchon is upstairs with him. One of his daughters—the Comtesse de Restaurama—came [illegible]

and—Lord, forgive me—but I thought he had rouge on his cheeks; he looked quite young again."

"I will be responsible," said Eugène, shuddering with horror, for he foresaw the end.

He climbed the stairs and reached Father Goriot's room. The old man was tossing on his bed. Bianchon was with him.

"Good-evening, father," said Eugène.

The old man turned his glassy eyes on him, smiled gently, and said:

"How is *she?*"

"She is quite well. But how are you?"

"There is nothing much the matter."

"Don't tire him," said Bianchon, drawing Eugène into a corner of the room.

"Well?" asked Rastignac.

"Nothing but a miracle can save him now. Serous congestion has set in; I have put on mustard plasters, and luckily he can feel them, they are acting."

"Is it possible to move him?"

"Quite out of the question. He must stay where he is, and be kept as quiet as possible——"

"Dear Bianchon," said Eugène, "we will nurse him between us."

"I have had the head physician round from my hospital to see him."

"And what did he say?"

"He will give no opinion till to-morrow evening. He promised to look in again at the end of the day. Unluckily, the preposterous creature must needs go and do something foolish this morning; he will not say what it was. He is as obstinate as a mule. As soon as I begin to talk to him he pretends not to hear, and lies as if he were asleep instead of answering, or if he opens his eyes he begins to groan. Some time this morning he went out on foot in the streets, nobody knows where he went, and he took everything that he had of any value with him. He has been driving some confounded

bargain, and it has been too much for his strength. One of his daughters has been here."

"Was it the Countess?" asked Eugène. "A tall, dark-haired woman, with large bright eyes, slender figure, and little feet?"

"Yes."

"Leave him to me for a bit," said Rastignac. "I will make him confess; he will tell me all about it."

"And meanwhile I will get my dinner. But try not to excite him; there is still some hope left."

"All right."

"How they will enjoy themselves to-morrow," said Father Goriot when they were alone. "They are going to a grand ball."

"What were you doing this morning, papa, to make yourself so poorly this evening that you have to stop in bed?"

"Nothing."

"Did not Anastasie come to see you?" demanded Rastignac.

go and wear the diamonds, so as to contradict the stories that are told all over Paris. How can she go to that heartless scoundrel and say, 'I owe a thousand francs to my dressmaker; pay her for me!' She cannot. I saw that myself. Delphine will be there too in a superb toilette, and Anastasie ought not to be outshone by her younger sister. And then—she was drowned in tears, poor girl! I felt so humbled yesterday when I had not the twelve thousand francs, that I would have given the rest of my miserable life to wipe out that wrong. You see, I could have borne anything once, but latterly this want of money has broken my heart. Oh! I did not do it by halves; I titivated myself up a bit, and went out and sold my spoons and forks and buckles for six hundred francs; then I went to old Daddy Gobseck, and sold a year's interest in my annuity for four hundred francs down. Pshaw! I can live on dry bread, as I did when I was a young man; if I have done it before, I can do it again. My Nasie shall have one happy evening, at any rate. She shall be smart. The banknote for a thousand francs is here under my pillow; it warms me to have it lying there under my head, for it is going to make my poor Nasie happy. She can turn that bad girl Victoire out of the house. A servant that cannot trust her mistress, did any one ever hear the like! I shall be quite well to-morrow. Nasie is coming at ten o'clock. They must not think that I am ill, or they will not go to the ball; they will stop and take care of me. To-morrow Nasie will come and hold me in her arms as if I were one of her children; her kisses will make me well again. After all, I might have spent the thousand francs on physic; I would far rather give them to my little Nasie, who can charm all the pain away. At any rate, I am some comfort to her in her misery; and that makes up for my unkindness in buying an annuity. She is in the depths, and I cannot draw her out of them now. Oh! I will go into business again, I will buy wheat in Odessa; out there, wheat fetches a quarter of the price it sells for here. There is a law against the importation of grain, but the good folk who made the law for-

got to prohibit the introduction of wheat products and food stuffs made from corn. Hey! hey! . . . That struck me this morning. There is a fine trade to be done in starch."

Eugène, watching the old man's face, thought that his friend was light-headed.

"Come," he said, "do not talk any more, you must rest——" Just then Bianchon came up, and Eugène went down to dinner.

The two students sat up with him that night, relieving each other in turn. Bianchon brought up his medical books and studied; Eugène wrote letters home to his mother and sisters. Next morning Bianchon thought the symptoms more hopeful, but the patient's condition demanded continual attention, which the two students alone were willing to give —a task impossible to describe in the squeamish phraseology of the epoch. Leeches must be applied to the wasted body, the poultices and hot foot-baths, and other details of the treatment required the physical strength and devotion of the two young men. Mme. de Restaud did not come; but she

King signed M. d'Ajuda's marriage-contract this morning, and the poor Vicomtesse knew nothing of it until two o'clock this afternoon. All Paris will flock to her house, of course, just as a crowd fills the Place de Grève to see an execution. It is horrible, is it not, to go out of curiosity to see if she will hide her anguish, and whether she will die courageously? I certainly should not go, my friend, if I had been at her house before; but, of course, she will not receive society any more after this, and all my efforts would be in vain. My position is a very unusual one, and besides, I am going there partly on your account. I am waiting for you. If you are not beside me in less than two hours, I do not know whether I could forgive such treason."

Rastignac took up a pen and wrote:

"I am waiting till the doctor comes to know if there is any hope of your father's life. He is lying dangerously ill. I will come and bring you the news, but I am afraid it may be a sentence of death. When I come you can decide whether you can go to the ball.—Yours a thousand times."

At half-past eight the doctor arrived. He did not take a very hopeful view of the case, but thought that there was no immediate danger. Improvements and relapses might be expected, and the good man's life and reason hung in the balance.

"It would be better for him to die at once," the doctor said as he took leave.

Eugène left Goriot to Bianchon's care, and went to carry the sad news to Mme. de Nucingen. Family feeling lingered in her, and this must put an end for the present to her plans of amusement.

"Tell her to enjoy her evening as if nothing had happened," cried Goriot. He had been lying in a sort of stupor, but he suddenly sat upright as Eugène went out.

Eugène, half heartbroken, entered Delphine's. Her hair

had been dressed; she wore her dancing slippers; she had only to put on her ball-dress; but when the artist is giving the finishing stroke to his creation, the last touches require more time than the whole groundwork of the picture.

"Why, you are not dressed!" she cried.

"Madame, your father——"

"My father again!" she exclaimed, breaking in upon him. "You need not teach me what is due to my father, I have known my father this long while. Not a word, Eugène. I will hear what you have to say when you are dressed. My carriage is waiting, take it, go round to your rooms and dress, Thérèse has put out everything in readiness for you. Come back as soon as you can; we will talk about my father on the way to Mme. de Beauséant's. We must go early; if we have to wait our turn in a row of carriages, we shall be lucky if we get there by eleven o'clock."

"Madame——"

"Quick! not a word!" she cried, darting into her dressing-room for a necklace.

"Do go, Monsieur Eugène, or you will vex madame," said

by torments such as these. Yet, for all his good impulses, he could not bring himself to make profession of the religion of pure souls to Delphine, nor to prescribe the duties of piety to her in the name of love. His education had begun to bear its fruits; he loved selfishly already. Besides, his tact had discovered to him the real nature of Delphine; he divined instinctively that she was capable of stepping over her father's corpse to go to the ball; and within himself he felt that he had neither the strength of mind to play the part of mentor, nor the strength of character to vex her, nor the courage to leave her to go alone.

"She would never forgive me for putting her in the wrong over it," he said to himself. Then he turned the doctor's dictum over in his mind; he tried to believe that Goriot was not so dangerously ill as he had imagined, and ended by collecting together a sufficient quantity of traitorous excuses for Delphine's conduct. She did not know how ill her father was; the kind old man himself would have made her go to the ball if she had gone to see him. So often it happens that this one or that stands condemned by the social laws that govern family relations; and yet there are peculiar circumstances in the case, differences of temperament, divergent interests, innumerable complications of family life that excuse the apparent offence.

Eugène did not wish to see too clearly; he was ready to sacrifice his conscience to his mistress. Within the last few days his whole life had undergone a change. Woman had entered into his world and thrown it into chaos, family claims dwindled away before her; she had appropriated all his being to her uses. Rastignac and Delphine found each other at a crisis in their lives when their union gave them the most poignant bliss. Their passion, so long proved, had only gained in strength by the gratified desire that often extinguishes passion. This woman was his, and Eugène recognized that not until then had he loved her; perhaps love is only gratitude for pleasure. This woman, vile or sublime, he adored for the pleasure she had brought as her

They set out. I

"What is it now

"I can hear the

said, almost angrily

he told the story o

of her father's fina

about this struggle l

had been paid for A

cried.

"I shall look frigh

"I will nurse my f

said aloud.

"Ah! now you are

tignac.

The lamps of five

about the Hôtel de Be

of his uniform stood

gateway. The great w

its eager curiosity to se

fall, and the rooms on

overflowing, when Mm

peared. Never since L

La grande Mademoisell

visit that

in this world—its vanities had always been valueless for her, save in so far as they contributed to the triumph of her passion. The salons were filled with the most beautiful women in Paris, resplendent in their toilettes, and radiant with smiles. Ministers and ambassadors, the most distinguished men at court, men bedizened with decorations, stars, and ribbons, men who bore the most illustrious names in France, had gathered about the Vicomtesse.

The music of the orchestra vibrated in wave after wave of sound from the golden ceiling of the palace, now made desolate for its queen.

Madame de Beauséant stood at the door of the first salon to receive the guests who were styled her friends. She was dressed in white, and wore no ornament in the plaits of hair braided about her head; her face was calm; there was no sign there of pride, nor of pain, nor of joy that she did not feel. No one could read her soul; she stood there like some Niobe carved in marble. For a few intimate friends there was a tinge of satire in her smile; but no scrutiny saw any change in her, nor had she looked otherwise in the days of the glory of her happiness. The most callous of her guests admired her as young Rome applauded some gladiator who could die smiling. It seemed as if society had adorned itself for a last audience of one of its sovereigns.

"I was afraid that you would not come," she said to Rastignac.

"Madame," he said, in an unsteady voice, taking her speech as a reproach, "I shall be the last to go, that is why I am here."

"Good," she said, and she took his hand. "You are perhaps the only one that I can trust here among all these. Oh, my friend, when you love, love a woman whom you are sure that you can love always. Never forsake a woman."

She took Rastignac's arm, and went towards a sofa in the card-room.

"I want you to go to the Marquis," she said. "Jacques, my footman, will go with you; he has a letter that you will

is more pressure of serum on one or other portion of the brain, it should affect his mental capacities in such and such directions. So if he should talk, notice very carefully what kind of ideas his mind seems to run on; whether memory, or penetration, or the reasoning faculties are exercised; whether sentiments or practical questions fill his thoughts; whether he makes forecasts or dwells on the past; in fact, you must be prepared to give an accurate report of him. It is quite likely that the extravasation fills the whole brain, in which case he will die in the imbecile state in which he is lying now. You cannot tell anything about these mysterious nervous diseases. Suppose the crash came here," said Bianchon, touching the back of the head, "very strange things have been known to happen; the brain sometimes partially recovers, and death is delayed. Or the congested matter may pass out of the brain altogether through channels which can only be determined by a post-mortem examination. There is an old man at the Hospital for Incurables, an imbecile patient, in his case the effusion has followed the direction of the spinal cord; he suffers horrid agonies, but he lives."

MUTILATION NOTED
JUL 9 1958

"Monsieur Eugène," she said, "monsieur and madame have had a terrible scene about some money that Madame (poor thing!) wanted for her father. She fainted, and the doctor came, and she had to be bled, calling out all the while, 'My father is dying; I want to see papa!' It was heartbreaking to hear her——"

"That will do, Thérèse. If she came now, it would be trouble thrown away. M. Goriot cannot recognize any one now."

"Poor, dear gentleman, is he as bad as that?" said Thérèse.

"You don't want me now, I must go and look after my dinner; it is half-past four," remarked Sylvie. The next instant she all but collided with Mme. de Restaud on the landing outside.

There was something awful and appalling in the sudden apparition of the Countess. She saw the bed of death by the dim light of the single candle, and her tears flowed at the sight of her father's passive features, from which the life had almost ebbed. Bianchon with thoughtful tact left the room.

"I could not escape soon enough," she said to Rastignac.

The student bowed sadly in reply. Mme. de Restaud took her father's hand and kissed it.

"Forgive me, father! You used to say that my voice would call you back from the grave; ah! come back for one moment to bless your penitent daughter. Do you hear me? Oh! this is fearful! No one on earth will ever bless me henceforth; every one hates me; no one loves me but you in all the world. My own children will hate me. Take me with you, father; I will love you, I will take care of you. He does not hear me . . . I am mad . . ."

She fell on her knees, and gazed wildly at the human wreck before her.

"My cup of misery is full," she said, turning her eyes upon Eugène. "M. de Trailles has fled, leaving enormous debts behind him, and I have found out that he was deceiving me. My husband will never forgive me, and I have left my fortune in his hands. I have lost all my illusions. Alas! I have

forsaken the one heart that loved me (she pointed to her father as she spoke), and for whom? I have held his kindness cheap, and slighted his affection; many and many a time I have given him pain, ungrateful wretch that I am!"

"He knew it," said Rastignac.

Just then Goriot's eyelids unclosed; it was only a muscular contraction, but the Countess' sudden start of reviving hope was no less dreadful than the dying eyes.

"Is it possible that he can hear me?" cried the Countess. "No," she answered herself, and sat down beside the bed. As Mme. de Restaud seemed to wish to sit by her father, Eugène went down to take a little food. The boarders were already assembled.

"Well," remarked the painter, as he joined them, "it seems that there is to be a death-orama upstairs."

"Charles, I think you might find something less painful to joke about," said Eugène.

"So we may not laugh here?" returned the painter. "What harm does it do? Bianchon said that the old man was quite insensible."

the Mayor's office, we will sew him in his winding sheet and bury him somewhere. What do you think we ought to do?"

"He will not smell at his bread like this any more," said the painter, mimicking the old man's little trick.

"Oh, hang it all!" cried the tutor, "let Father Goriot drop, and let us have something else for a change. He is a standing dish, and we have had him with every sauce this hour or more. It is one of the privileges of the good city of Paris that anybody may be born, or live, or die there without attracting any attention whatsoever. Let us profit by the advantages of civilization. There are fifty or sixty deaths every day; if you have a mind to do it, you can sit down at any time and wail over whole hecatombs of dead in Paris. Father Goriot has gone off the hooks, has he? So much the better for him. If you venerate his memory, keep it to yourselves, and let the rest of us feed in peace."

"Oh, to be sure," said the widow, "it is all the better for him that he is dead. It looks as though he had had trouble enough, poor soul, while he was alive."

And this was all the funeral oration delivered over him who had been for Eugène the type and embodiment of Fatherhood.

The fifteen lodgers began to talk as usual. When Bianchon and Eugène had satisfied their hunger, the rattle of spoons and forks, the boisterous conversation, the expressions on the faces that bespoke various degrees of want of feeling, gluttony, or indifference, everything about them made them shiver with loathing. They went out to find a priest to watch that night with the dead. It was necessary to measure their last pious cares by the scanty sum of money that remained. Before nine o'clock that evening the body was laid out on the bare sacking of the bedstead in the desolate room; a lighted candle stood on either side, and the priest watched at the foot. Rastignac made inquiries of this latter as to the expenses of the funeral, and wrote to the Baron de Nucingen and the Comte de Restaud, entreating both gentlemen to authorize their man of business to defray the charges of lay-

ing their father-in-law in the grave. He sent Christophe with the letters; then he went to bed, tired out, and slept.

Next day Bianchon and Rastignac were obliged to take the certificate to the registrar themselves, and by twelve o'clock the formalities were completed. Two hours went by; no word came from the Count nor from the Baron; nobody appeared to act for them, and Rastignac had already been obliged to pay the priest. Sylvie asked ten francs for sewing the old man in his winding-sheet and making him ready for the grave, and Eugène and Bianchon calculated that they had scarcely sufficient to pay for the funeral, if nothing was forthcoming from the dead man's family. So it was the medical student who laid him in a pauper's coffin, despatched from Bianchon's hospital, whence he obtained it at a cheaper rate.

"Let us play those wretches a trick," said he "Go to the cemetery, buy a grave for five years at Père-Lachaise, and arrange with the Church and the undertaker to have a third-class funeral. If the daughters and their husbands decline

He sealed the note, and begged the porter to give it to Thérèse for her mistress; but the man took it to the Baron de Nucingen, who flung the note into the fire. Eugène, having finished his errands, returned to the lodging-house about three o'clock. In spite of himself, the tears came into his eyes. The coffin, in its scanty covering of black cloth, was standing there on the pavement before the gate, on two chairs. A withered sprig of hyssop was soaking in the holy water bowl of silver-plated copper; there was not a soul in the street, not a passer-by had stopped to sprinkle the coffin; there was not even an attempt at a black drapery over the wicket. It was a pauper who lay there; no one made a pretence of mourning for him; he had neither friends nor kindred—there was no one to follow him to the grave.

Bianchon's duties compelled him to be at the hospital, but he had left a few lines for Eugène, telling his friend about the arrangements he had made for the burial service. The house student's note told Rastignac that a mass was beyond their means, that the ordinary office for the dead was cheaper, and must suffice, and that he had sent word to the undertaker by Christophe. Eugène had scarcely finished reading Bianchon's scrawl, when he looked up and saw the little circular gold locket that contained the hair of Goriot's two daughters in Mme. Vauquer's hands.

"How dared you take it?" he asked.

"Good Lord! is that to be buried along with him?" retorted Sylvie. "It is gold."

"Of course it shall!" Eugène answered indignantly; "he shall at any rate take one thing that may represent his daughters into the grave with him."

When the hearse came, Eugène had the coffin carried into the house again, unscrewed the lid, and reverently laid on the old man's breast the token that recalled the days when Delphine and Anastasie were innocent little maidens, before they began "to think for themselves," as he had moaned out in his agony.

Rastignac and Christophe and the two undertaker's men

— they waited ther
chorister, and the
hand. He could no

"Yes, Monsieur E
and worthy man, wi
other; he never did a
trouble."

The two priests, t
said and did as much
in an age when reli
nothing.

The ecclesiastics ch
De profundis. The v
utes. There was but
and chorister agreed t

"There is no one el
"so we may as well go
past five."

But just as the coffin
riages, with the armor
and the Baron de Nuci
cession to Père-Lachai
lowered into the grave,
the while. The ecclesia
students could afford t
lackeys disappeared —

so trifling in itself, gave Rastignac a terrible pang of distress. It was growing dusk, the damp twilight fretted his nerves; he gazed down into the grave, and the tears he shed were drawn from him by the sacred emotion, a single-hearted sorrow. When such tears fall on earth, their radiance reaches heaven. And with that tear that fell on Father Goriot's grave, Eugène Rastignac's youth ended. He folded his arms and gazed at the clouded sky; and Christophe, after a glance at him, turned and went—Rastignac was left alone.

He went a few paces further, to the highest point of the cemetery, and looked out over Paris and the windings of the Seine; the lamps were beginning to shine on either side of the river. His eyes turned almost eagerly to the space between the column of the Place Vendôme and the cupola of the Invalides; there lay the shining world that he had wished to reach. He glanced over that humming hive, seeming to draw a foretaste of its honey, and said magniloquently:

"Henceforth there is war between us."

And by way of throwing down the glove to Society, Rastignac went to dine with Mme. de Nucingen.

THE UNCONSCIOUS HUMORISTS

To M. le Comte Jules de Castellane.

LÉON DE LORA, the famous French landscape painter, belongs to one of the noblest families of Roussillon. The Loras came originally from Spain; and while they are distinguished for their ancient lineage, for the last century they have faithfully kept up the traditions of the hidalgo's proverbial poverty. Léon himself came up to Paris on foot from his department of the Pyrénées-Orientales with the sum of eleven francs in his pocket for all viaticum; and in some sort forgot the hardships of childhood and the poverty at home in the later hardships which a young dauber never lacks when his whole fortune consists in an intrepid vocation. Afterwards the absorbing cares brought by fame and success still further helped him to forget.

If you have followed the tortuous and capricious course of these Studies, you may perhaps recollect one of the heroes of *Un Début dans la Vie*, Schinner's pupil, Mistigris, who reappears from time to time in various Scenes.

You would not recognize the frisky penniless dauber in the landscape painter of 1845, the rival of Hobbema, Ruysdael, and Claude Lorrain. Lora is a great man. He lives near his old master Hippolyte Schinner in a charming house (his own property) in the Rue de Berlin, not very far from the Hôtel de Brambourg, where his friend Bridau lives. He is a member of the Institut and an officer of the Legion of Honor, he has twenty thousand francs a year, his work fetches its weight in gold; and, fact even more extraordinary (as he thinks) than the invitations to court balls which he sometimes receives —the fame of a name published abroad over Europe by the press for the last sixteen years at length reached the valley in

as plain Gazonal), to whi
was himself—that is to sa
late Léonie Gazonal, wife

Upon this, in the sum
zonal went to apprise the i
of the fact that young Léo
nor was he dead, as they
finest geniuses of the mod
fused to believe. The elde
his cousin Gazonal that l
some Parisian wag.

Time went on, and the sa
in a lawsuit, which the p
summarily stopped on a que
transferred to the Council
himself to go to Paris to wa
to clear up this matter, an
account for his impertinence
forth from his furnished lod
Champs, and was astonished
Rue de Berlin; and, learni
traveling in Italy, renounce
of asking him for satisfac
whether the great man wo
nephew.

Through 1848

looked on the case as lost beyond hope. The secretary of the Master of Requests, who drew up the report, told him in confidence that it was unfavorable to his claims, and his own barrister confirmed the news. Gazonal, at home a commandant of the National Guard, and as shrewd a manufacturer as you would find in his department, in Paris felt so utterly insignificant, and found the cost of living so high, that he kept close in his shabby lodging.

The child of the South, deprived of the sun, poured maledictions upon Paris, that "rheumatism factory," as he called it; and when he came to reckon up the expenses of his stay, vowed to himself to poison the prefect or to "minotaurize" him on his return. In gloomier moments he slew the prefect outright; then he cheered up a little, and contented himself with "minotaurizing" the culprit.

One morning after breakfast, inwardly storming, he snatched the newspaper up savagely, and the following lines caught his eye at the end of a paragraph: "Our great landscape painter, Léon de Lora, returned from Italy a month ago. He is sending a good deal of his work to the Salon this year, so we may look forward to a very brilliant exhibition——" The words rang in Gazonal's ears like the inner voice which tells the gambler that he will win. With Southern impetuosity, Gazonal dashed out of the house, hailed a cab, and went to his cousin's house in the Rue de Berlin.

Léon de Lora happened to be engaged at this moment, but he sent a message asking his relative to breakfast with him next day at the Café de Paris. Gazonal, like a man of the South, poured out his woes to the valet.

Next morning, overdressed for the occasion in a coat of corn-cockle blue, with gilt buttons, a frilled shirt, white waistcoat, and yellow kid gloves, Gazonal fidgeted up and down the boulevard for an hour and a half, after learning from the *cafetier* (so provincials call the proprietor of a café) that gentlemen usually breakfasted between eleven and twelve.

"About half-past eleven," so he used to tell the story afterwards to everybody at home, "two Parisians in plain surtouts,

gave the waiter thi

Over that monster brea
consumed six dozen Osten
Soubise, a chicken à la Ma
rooms on toast, and gre
d'œuvres, washed down wi
of champagne, several cu
launched forth into magn
Paris. The noble manufa
the four-pound loaves, of t
lous indifference towards e
by, of the cold, of the rain,
fiacres"—and all so amu
warmed towards him and

"The histor-r-ry of my la
accentuating every word
tor-r-ry of my lawsuit is qui
I find a fool of a barrister
time to keep his eyes open,
He is a shell-less snail that
go on foot. They have swin
but go from one to another
gone in a carriage. They wi
hide yourself out of sight in

they can fight it out with my workpeople, a hundred strong, that will give them a cudgeling which will make them change their minds——"

"Come now, cousin, how long have you been here?" inquired the landscape painter.

"For two whole years. Oh that prefect and his 'disputed jurisdiction,' he shall pay dear for it; I will have his life, and give mine for it at the Assize Court——"

"Which Councillor is chairman of your committee?"

"An ex-journalist, not worth ten *sols*, though they call him Massol."

Lora and Bixiou exchanged glances.

"And the commissioner?"

"Funnier still! It is a Master of Requests, a professor of something or other at the Sorbonne; he used to write for some review. I pr-r-rofess the deepest disrespect for him——"

"Claude Vignon?" suggested Bixiou.

"That is the name—Massol and Vignon, that is the style of the unstable firm of bandits (*Trestaillons*) in league with my prefect."

"There is hope for it yet," said Léon de Lora. "You can do anything, you see, in Paris, cousin—anything, good or bad, just or unjust. Anything can be done or undone, or done over again here."

"I will be hanged if I will stop in it for another ten seconds; it is the dullest place in France."

As he spoke, the three were pacing up and down that stretch of asphalt on which you can scarcely walk of an afternoon without meeting somebody whose name has been proclaimed from Fame's trumpet, for good or ill. The ground shifts. Once it used to be the Place Royale, then the Pont Neuf possessed a privilege transferred in our day to the Boulevard des Italiens.

The landscape painter held forth for his cousin's benefit. "Paris," said he, "is an instrument which a man must learn to play. If we stop here for ten minutes, I will give you a lesson. There! look," he continued, raising his cane to point out a couple that issued from the Passage de l'Opéra.

was fresh, her ha
her figure lacked
"It," answere
mother."
"A r-r-rat? Q
Léon favored
"The 'rat' may
started, but Bixio
as they left the c
trifle flushed.
"The rat has jus
is on its way home
it will come back t
ballet, that is, for t
age of thirteen; it
the creature's mar
she will be everythi
she will have a nan
prostitute. Her wo
as you see her to-da
this morning at the
rehearsal as full of
puzzle; and she will

"Porters, poor folk, actors, and dancers," said Bixiou. "Nothing but the direst poverty could induce an eight-year-old child to bear such torture of feet and joints, to lead a well-conducted life till she is sixteen or eighteen years old (simply as a business speculation), and to keep a hideous old woman always with her like stable-litter about some choice plant.—You will see genius of every kind go past—artists in the bud and artists run to seed—all of them engaged in rearing that ephemeral monument to the glory of France, called the Opéra; a daily renewed combination of physical and mental strength, will and genius, found nowhere but in Paris."

"I have already seen the Opéra," Gazonal remarked with a self-sufficient air.

"Yes, from your bench at three francs sixty centimes, as you have seen Paris from the Rue Croix des Petits Champs—without knowing anything about it. What did they give at the Opéra when you went?"

"*William Tell.*"

"Good," returned Léon, "you must have enjoyed Mathilde's great duet. Well, what do you suppose the prima donna did as soon as she went off the stage?"

"Did?—What?"

"Sat down to two mutton cutlets, underdone, which her servant had prepared for her——"

"Ah! *bouffre!*"

"Malibran kept herself up with brandy—it was that that killed her. Now for something else. You have seen the ballet; now you have just seen the ballet go past in plain morning dress, not knowing that your lawsuit depends upon those feet?"

"My lawsuit?"

"There, cousin, there goes a *marcheuse,* as she is called."

Léon pointed out one of the superb creatures that have lived sixty years of life at five-and-twenty; a beauty so unquestioned, so certain to be sought, that she keeps in the shade. She was tall, she walked well, with a dandy's assured

knows how to do nothing else
at the minor theatres; she ca
French cities which maintai
money, or no wish to go abr
great Paris school trains dar
world. If a rat becomes a *n*
rante, she must have had son
Paris—some rich man whom
or a poor young fellow who
that passed just now will dre
evening as a princess, a peasa
and gets perhaps two hundre

"She is better dressed tha

"If you went to call on her,
and a man-servant in her spl
Saint-Georges," said Bixiou.
comes are to the revenues of t
so is she to the eighteenth
wreck of former greatness. C
At this moment she rules du T
of influence in the Chamber—

"And the higher ranks of

"Look!" said Lora, pointing

she lives like a princess. The price of your factory would not buy you the right of wishing her a good morning thirty times."

"*Eh bé!* I can easily say it to myself; it will cost less."

"Do you see that good-looking young man on the front seat? He is a vicomte bearing a great name, and he is her first gentleman of the chamber; he arranges with the newspapers for her; he carries peace or declares war of a morning on the manager of the Opéra; or he makes it his business to superintend the applause when she comes on or off the stage."

"My good sirs, this beats everything; I had not a suspicion of Paris as it is."

"Oh well, at any rate you may as well find out what may be seen in ten minutes in the Passage de l'Opéra.—There!" exclaimed Bixiou.

Two persons, a man and a woman, came out as he spoke. The woman was neither pretty nor plain; there was a certain distinction that revealed the artist in the fashion and color of her gown. The man looked rather like a minor canon.

"That is a double-bass and a *second premier sujet*," continued Bixiou. "The double-bass is a tremendous genius; but the double-bass, being a mere accessory in the score, scarcely makes as much as the dancer. The *second sujet* made a great name before Taglioni and Elssler appeared; she preserved the traditions of the character dance among us; she would have been in the first rank to-day if the other two had not come to reveal undreamed-of poetry in the dance; as it is, she is only in the second rank, and yet she draws her thirty thousand francs, and has a faithful friend in a peer of France with great influence in the Chamber. Look! here comes the third-rate dancer, a dancer that owes her (professional) existence to the omnipotent press. If her engagement had not been renewed, the men in office would have had one more enemy on their backs. The *corps de ballet* is the great power at the Opéra; for which reason, in the upper ranks of dandyism and politics, it is much better form to make a connection among the dancers than among the singers.

... A hundred
thousand for a
scourges of the O
"It fills me with
sand francs walki
"You will soon
Come with us.—W
violoncello, and sh
show you how we a
"It is a kaleidos
"Before we begin
lard," began Bixiou
"And Gaillard m
"What is the new
"It is not a scene,
of ours; he has com
newspaper; his char
able for its tidal ebb
win your lawsuit."
"It is lost——"
"Just the time to
Arrived at Théodo
the friends were infor
engaged. It was

"In that case, dear Suzanne, the rest of us may walk in——"

"Oh! what a lovely creature!" cried Gazonal.

"That is Mme. Gaillard," said Léon de Lora; and, lowering his voice for his cousin's ear, he added, "You see before you, dear fellow, as modest a woman as you will find in Paris; she has retired from public life, and is contented with one husband."

"What can I do for you, my lords?" said the facetious managing director, imitating Frederick Lemaître.

Théodore Gaillard had been a clever man; but, as so often happens in Paris, he had grown stupid with staying too long in the same groove. The principal charm of his conversation consisted in tags of quotation with which it was garnished, bits from popular plays mouthed after the manner of some well-known actor.

"We have come for a chat," said Léon

"*Encôre, jeûne hôme!*" (Odry in *Les Salimbanques.*)

"This time we shall have him for certain," said Gaillard's interlocutor by way of conclusion.

"Are you quite sure of that, Daddy Fromenteau? This is the eleventh time that we have had him fast at night, and in the morning he was gone."

"What can you do? I never saw such a debtor. He is like a locomotive, he goes to sleep in Paris and wakes up in Seine-et-Oise. He is a puzzle for a locksmith."

Seeing Gaillard smile, he added, "That is how we talk in our line. You 'nab' a man, or you lock him up; that means you arrest him. They talk differently in the criminal police. Vidocq used to say to his man, 'They have got it ready for you!' which was all the funnier because 'it' meant the guillotine."

Bixiou jogged Gazonal's elbow, and at once the visitor became all eyes and ears. "Does monsieur give palm oil?" continued Fromenteau, quite quietly, though there was a perceptible shade of menace in the tone.

"It is a matter of fifty centimes," said Gaillard (a remi-

"The blackguard
exclaimed Léon.

"Then do you b
easily and curiously
son, dressed like a

"Which kind do

"Are there severa

"As many as five,
inal Department (V
Secret Superintende
ical Department (F
tem directly in the e
and so on. The Cl
other department at
end with M. Decazes.
have been in the forc
tenson."

The listeners looke
in their minds—"Ho

"And now they wan
the little man that h
"Since 1830 they will
prefecture; I sent in
knack of nabbing pris

esty," said Fromenteau sententiously; "I am for those that pay best. You want to recover fifty thousand francs, and you higgle over farthings. Give me five hundred francs, and to-morrow morning we will have him in quod."

"Five hundred francs for you yourself!" cried Théodore Gaillard.

"Lisette wants a shawl," answered the detective without moving a muscle of his countenance. "I call her 'Lisette' because of Béranger."

"You have a Lisette, and still you stay in your line!" cried the virtuous Gazonal.

"It is so amusing. Talk of field sports; it is far more interesting to run a man to earth in Paris!"

"They must be uncommonly clever to do it, and that is a fact," said Gazonal, thinking aloud.

"Oh, if I were to reckon up all the qualities that a man needs if he is to make his mark in our line, you would think I was describing a man of genius," replied Fromenteau, taking Gazonal's measure at a glance. "You must be lynx-eyed, must you not? Bold—for you must drop into a house like a bombshell, walk up to people as if you had known them all your life, and propose the never-refused dirty business, and so on.—You must have Memory, Sagacity, Invention—for you must be quick to think of expedients, and never repeat yourself; espionage must always be moulded on the individual character of those with whom you have to do—but invention is a gift of Heaven. Then you need agility, strength, and so on. All these faculties, gentlemen, are painted up over the door of Amoros' Gymnasium as virtues. All these things we must possess under penalty of forfeiting the salary of a hundred francs per month paid us by the Government, in the Rue de Jérusalem, or the commercial police."

"And you appear to me to be a remarkable man," said Gazonal. Fromenteau looked at him, but he neither answered nor showed any sign of feeling, and went away without taking leave, an unmistakable sign of genius.

"Well, cousin, you have just seen the police incarnate," said Léon.

he has not time to

"If go we must
let us take the long

"Great men's say
"use wears the gilt
of the sayings if
going?"

"To see our hatte

"Bravo! If we g
fun."

"Gazonal," began
benefit. Only—you
franc piece, for you
queer quiz; the man
In these days, my dea
self with glory, and a
cule, and hence we ha

"When everybody
distinguish himself?"

"Distinguish yours
Your cousin wears a
look at me, not at hi

After this remark

hats, a person who pays newspaper proprietors as much for advertisements as any three vendors of sugar-plums or patent pills—VITAL, it ran (LATE FINOT), HAT MANUFACTURER, not plain HATTER, as heretofore.

Bixiou called Gazonal's attention to the glories of the shop window. "Vital, my dear boy, is making forty thousand francs per annum."

"And he is still in business as a hatter!" exclaimed Gazonal, nearly breaking Bixiou's arm with a violent wrench.

"You shall see the man directly," added Léon; "you want a hat, you shall have one gratis."

"Is M. Vital not in?" asked Bixiou, seeing no one at the desk.

"Monsieur is correcting proofs in his private office," said the assistant.

"What do you think of that, hey?" said Léon, turning to his cousin Then to the assistant, "Can we speak to him without disturbing his inspirations?"

"Let the gentlemen come in," called a voice—a bourgeois voice, a voice to inspire confidence in voters, a powerful voice, suggestive of a good steady income, and Vital vouchsafed to show himself. He was dressed in black from head to foot, and carried a diamond pin in his resplendent shirt-frill. Beyond him the three friends caught a glimpse of a young and pretty woman sitting at a desk with a piece of embroidery in her hands.

Vital was between thirty and forty years of age; native joviality had been repressed in him by ambitions. It is the privilege of a fine organization to be neither tall nor short, and Vital enjoyed that advantage. He was tolerably stout, and careful of his appearance; and if the hair had grown rather thin on his forehead, he turned the partial baldness to account, to give himself the airs of a man consumed by thought. You could see by the way that his wife looked at him that she admired her husband for a great man and a genius. Vital loved artists. Not that he had himself any taste for the arts, but he felt that he was one of the confra-

"What, sir, in one fortnight
strated Vital. "Why, two mo
enough to strike out a shape to s
lithograph, there it lies. I hav
already. I would not take so m
you are something more, you are
stand me, my dear sir."

"Here is one of our great inve
a man as Jacquart if he would b
said Bixiou, introducing Gazona
cloth weaver, the inventor of a
color in old clothes; he wanted to
enon, for it was you who said, 'T
this gentleman into ecstasies.
You believe in something; you hav

Vital scarcely heard the words
with joy.

"Rise, wife. This gentleman
science!"

Mme. Vital rose at a sign fr
bowed.

"Shall I have the honor of fin
tinued Vital, radiant and officiou

"At my price," said Bixiou.

"Quite so. I ask nothing but th

"You take a great deal of trouble," said Gazonal.

"Oh! only for a few persons; only for those who can appreciate the value of the pains that I take. Why, among the aristocracy there is but one man who really understands a hat —the Prince de Béthune. How is it that men do not see, as women do, that the hat is the first thing to strike the eye? Why do they not think of changing the present state of things, which is disgraceful, it must be said? But a Frenchman, of all people, is the most persistent in his folly. I quite know the difficulties, gentlemen! I am not speaking now of my writings on a subject which I believe I have approached in a philosophical spirit; but simply as a practical hatter I have discovered the means of individualizing the hideous head-gear which Frenchmen are privileged to wear until I can succeed in abolishing it altogether."

He held up an example of the hideous modern hat.

"Behold the enemy, gentlemen. To think that the most intelligent nation under the sun should consent to put this 'stove-pipe' (as one of our own writers has said), this 'stove-pipe' upon their heads! . . . Here you see the various curves which I have introduced into those dreadful lines," he added, pointing out one of his own "creations." "Yet, although I understand how to suit the hat to the wearer—as you see, for here is a doctor's hat, this is for a tradesman, and that for a dandy or an artist, a stout man, a thin man—still, the hat in itself is always hideous. There! do you fully grasp my whole idea?"

He took up a broad-brimmed hat with a low crown.

"This is an old hat belonging to Claude Vignon, the great critic, independent writer, and free liver. . . . He has gone to the support of the ministry, he is a professor and librarian, he only writes for the *Débats* now, he has gained the post of Master of Requests. He has an income of sixteen thousand francs, he makes four thousand francs by his journalistic work, he wears a ribbon at his buttonhole.—Well, here is his new hat."

Vital exhibited a head covering, the *juste milieu* visible in every line.

...ing bars. It real
Gazonal.

"In the first place, our wind
up at night; and for one hat
sell five at night."

"Everything is queer in P.

"Well, in spite of my effort
sued his panegyric), "we mus
am working in that direction.

"What hinders you?" asked

"Cheapness, sir. You start
at fifteen francs—the price w
never have fifteen francs of re
hat. A beaver costs thirty fi
same as ever. Beaver, I say, th
weight of real beaver skins bou
article is worth three hundred
and an ounce is needed for a
hat is not good for much, the s
in the sunshine in ten minutes,
What we call 'beaver' is reall
best hats are made from the b
the sides, and the third from t
trade secrets, you are men of h
beaver or hare-skin on your he
soluble—how to find fifteen or

ple must be persuaded to wear the buckle, the gold galoon, the plumes, and satin-lined brims of the times of Louis XIII. and Louis XIV. Our business would expand ten times over if we went into the fancy line. France would be the hat-mart of the world, just as Paris always sets the fashion in women's dress. The present hat may be made anywhere. Ten million francs of export trade to be secured for Paris is involved in the question——"

"A revolution!" cried Bixiou, working up enthusiasm.

"Yes, a radical revolution. The form must be remodeled."

"You are happy after Luther's fashion," said Léon, always on the lookout for a pun. "You are dreaming of a reformation."

"Yes, sir. Ah! if the twelve or fifteen artists, capitalists, or dandies that set the fashion would but have courage for twenty-four hours, there would be a great commercial victory won for France. See here! as I tell my wife, I would give my fortune to succeed. Yes, it is my one ambition to regenerate the hat—and to disappear."

"The man is stupendous," remarked Gazonal, when they had left the shop, "but all your eccentrics have a touch of the South about them, I do assure you——"

"Let us go along the Rue Saint-Marc," said Bixiou.

"Are we to see something else?"

"Yes, you are going to see a money-lender—a money-lender among the 'rats' and *marcheuses*. A woman that has more hideous secrets in her keeping than gowns in her shop window," said Bixou.

He pointed as he spoke to a dirty-looking shop like a blot on the dazzling expanse of modern street. It had last been painted somewhere about the year 1820, a subsequent bankruptcy must have left it in a dubious condition on the owner's hands, and now the color was obscured by a thick coating of grime and dust. The windows were filthy, the door handle had that significant trick of turning of its own accord, char-

[illegible] Princesse de
[illegible] begin under
[illegible] you don't be
[illegible] come here as

[illegible] monsieur," retort
[illegible] have several things to
[illegible] ist. "I live at numl
[illegible] If you like to look in, i
[illegible] bargain——"

"Perhaps monsieur would l
[illegible] worn just now?" smiled

"No. It is a matter of a v
said with much gravity.

Fifteen minutes later, Mme.
at Bixiou's rooms. Léon and
him to see the end of the jest,
the trio looking as sober as thr
ten in collaboration) has not n
deserved.

Bixiou unblushingly produc
"These, madame, belonged to t
he, giving Mme. Nourrisson,
change for her [illegible]

Fifteen minutes later, Mme. Nourrisson actually appeared at Bixiou's rooms

to the romance," said Léon; "and not, as usual, the sequel?"

"My friend here from the South," put in Bixiou, "wishes to marry a certain young lady, very well-to-do and well connected; but he would like to know beforehand (huge family interests being at stake) whether there has been any slip in the past."

"How much is monsieur willing to pay?" she asked, eyeing the prospective bridegroom.

"A hundred francs," said Gazonal, no longer astonished at anything.

"Many thanks," said she, with a grimace which a monkey might despairingly envy.

"Come, now, how much do you want, Mme. Nourrisson?" asked Bixiou, putting his arm round her waist.

"First of all, my dear gentlemen, never since I have been in business have I seen any one, man or woman, beating down the price of happiness. And, in the second place, you are all three of you chaffing me," she added, and a smile that stole over her hard lips was reinforced by a gleam of cat-like suspicion in her eyes. "Now, if your happiness is not involved, your fortune is at stake, and a man that lives up so many pair of stairs is still less the person to haggle over a rich match.—Come, now, what is it all about, my lambs?" with sudden affability.

"We want to know about the firm of Beunier and Company," said Bixiou, very well pleased to pick up some information concerning a person in whom he was interested.

"Oh! a louis will be enough for that——"

"And why?"

"I have all the mother's jewels. She is hard up from one quarter to another; why, it is all she can do to pay interest on the money she owes me. Are you looking for a wife in that quarter? You noodle! Hand me over forty francs, and I will give you a good hundred crowns' worth of gossip."

Gazonal brought a forty-franc piece to light, and Mme. Nourrisson gave them some startling stories of the straits to

get a bad name; it is better to get good security. It is diamond cut diamond, and you save your bile.'—But go she would; she asked me to back her up, and we went together. —'Madame is not at home.'—'Go on!' said Mother Mahuchet. 'We will wait for her if I stop here till midnight!'—So we camped down in the ante-chamber and chatted together. Well, doors opened and shut; by and by there was a sound of little footsteps and low voices; and, for my own part, I felt sorry. The company was coming to dinner. You can judge of the turn things took.

"The Countess sent in her own woman to wheedle la Mahuchet—'You shall be paid to-morrow'—and all the rest of the ways of trying it on.—No go.—Then the Countess, in her Sunday best, as you may say, comes into the dining-room. La Mahuchet hears her, flings open the door, and walks in. Lord! at the sight of the dinner-table, all sparkling like a jewel-case, the dish-covers and the plate and the candle-sconces, she went off like a soda-water bottle. She flings out her bomb—'Those that spend other people's money have no business to give dinner-parties; they ought to live quietly. You a Countess! and you owe a hundred francs to a poor shoemaker's wife with seven children!'—You can imagine how she ran on, an uneducated woman as she is. At the first word of excuse—'No money'—from the Countess, la Mahuchet cries out, 'Eh! my lady, but there is silver-plate here! Pawn your spoons and forks and pay me!'—'Take them yourself,' says the Countess, catching up half-a-dozen and slipping them into her hand, and we hurried away downstairs pell-mell.—What a success! Bah! no. Out in the street tears came into la Mahuchet's eyes, she is a good soul; she took the things back, and apologized. She found out the depths of the Countess' poverty—they were German silver!"

"Dishcovered that she had no cover," commented Léon de Lora, in whom the Mistigris of old was apt to reappear.

The pun flashed a sudden light across Mme. Nourrisson's brain. "Aha! my dear sir, you are an artist, a dramatic writer, you live in the Rue du Helder, you have kept com-

Countess, said Bixio

"I was a confident
shal of France," she
Prince d'Ysembourg.
at the Emperor's cour
shal. I took care at
Countess bursts into t
shal (the Prince d'Y
and a simpleton to bo
away at the wars in S
note for a thousand fr
or two at once, her c
nothing for to-morrow
free-handed in those d
notes out of his desk.—
stairs. She did not see
not altogether motherly
tell the *chasseur* in a lo
round. My mother of
the Rue de Richelieu—
pays for a dress that co
to pay for one dress by
afterwards she could ap
out as a woman must b

not reckon, and pays blindly.' If it is a subject for a comedy that you want, I will let you have some for a consideration——"

And making an end of a harangue, colored by all the phases of her past life, she departed, leaving Gazonal in dismay, caused partly by the matter of her discourse, but at least as much by an exhibition of five yellow teeth which she meant for a smile.

"What are we to do next?" he inquired.

"Find some banknotes," said Bixiou, whistling for his porter; "I want money, and I am going to teach you the uses of a porter. You imagine that they are meant to open doors; whereas their real use is to help vagrants like me out of difficulties, and to assist the artists whom they take under their protection, for which reason mine will take the Montyon prize some of these days."

The common expression, "eyes like saucers," found sufficient illustration in Gazonal's countenance at that moment.

The man that suddenly appeared in the doorway was of no particular age, a something between a private detective and a merchant's clerk, but more unctuous and sleeker than either; his hair was greasy, his person paunchy, his complexion of the moist and unwholesome kind that you observe in the superiors of convents. He wore a black cloth jacket, drab trousers, and list slippers.

"What do you want, sir?" inquired this personage, with a half-patronizing, half-servile manner.

"Oh, Ravenouillet—(his name is Ravenouillet," said Bixiou, turning to Gazonal)—"have you your 'bills receivable' about you?"

Ravenouillet felt in a side-pocket, and produced the stickiest book that Gazonal had even seen in his life.

"Just enter a note of these two bills for five hundred francs at three months, and put your name to them for me."

Bixiou brought out a couple of notes made payable to his order as he spoke. Ravenouillet accepted them forthwith, and noted them down on the greasy page among his wife's entries of various sums due from other lodgers.

neighbor the grocer; I have just come from down yonder, for they tell us that every one who comes here gets a place.' At these words a cold shiver ran through Massol. He thought within himself that if he were so ill advised as to oblige a compatriot, who for that matter was a perfect stranger, he should have the whole department tumbling in upon him. He thought of the wear and tear to bell-pulls, door hinges, and carpets, he saw his only servant giving notice, he had visions of trouble with his landlord, of complaints from the other tenants of the combined odors of garlic and *diligence* introduced into the house. So he fixed upon his petitioner such an eye as a butcher turns upon a sheep brought into the shambles. In vain. His fellow-countryman survived that gaze, or rather that stab, and continued his discourse, much on this wise, according to Massol's report of it:—

"'I have my ambitions, like every one else,' said he; 'I shall not go back again until I am rich, if indeed I go back at all, for Paris is the ante-chamber of Paradise. They tell me that you write for the newspapers, and do anything you like with people here, and that for you it is ask and have with the Government. I have abilities, like all of us down yonder, but I know myself: I have no education; I cannot write (which is a pity, for I have ideas); so I do not think of coming into competition with you; I know myself; I should not make anything out. But since you can do anything, and we are brothers, as you may say, having played together as children, I count upon you to give me a start in life, and to use your influence for me.—Oh, you must. I want a place, the kind of place to suit my talents, a place that I, being I, am fitted to fill with a chance of making my fortune——'

"Massol was just on the point of brutally thrusting his fellow-countryman out at the door with a rough word in his ear, when the said countryman concluded thus:—

"'So I do not ask for a place in the civil service, where a man gets on as slowly as a tortoise, for there is your cousin that has been a tax collector these twenty years, and is tax

vanity, your latter-day syco
guised in trappings of decor
of problems palpitating wit
preaching the emancipation c
of the juvenile offender, and
of the ticket-of-leave man; wh
a worse plight than the Irish,
than dark cells, upon a scantier
grants per head for convicts. I
in my life, and that is my port

"Yes," said Bixiou. "Suppo
of huge cages, divided up like a
hundreds of cells or dens, in wh
species are intended to ply thei
that this animal, with the face of
should come to a man of scien
specimen of the order *Bimana*, w
feet square, filled with old boo
I want him to live in it all hi
children as pretty as cherubs; h
kitchen, and promenade; he mus
and never go out; he must shut
thing that goes on in

regions of the Impossible," added Gazonal. "You in Paris exhibit all kinds of manufactures; but there are by-products of which you know nothing. . . . There are your working classes.—They bear the brunt of competition with foreign industries, hardship against hardship, just as the regiments bore the brunt of Napoleon's duel with Europe."

"Here we are. This is where our friend Vauvinet lives," said Bixiou. "People who paint contemporary manners are too apt to copy old portraits; it is one of their greatest mistakes. In our own times every calling has been transformed. Tradesmen are peers of France, artists are capitalists, writers of vaudevilles have money in the funds. Some few figures remain as before; but, generally speaking, most professions have dropped their manners and customs along with their distinctive dress. Gobseck, Gigonnet, Chaboisseau, and Samanon were the last of the Romans; to-day we rejoice in the possession of our Vauvinet, the good fellow, the dandy-denizen of the greenroom, the frequenter of the society of *lorettes,* the owner of a neat little one-horse brougham. Watch my man carefully, friend Gazonal, and you shall see a comedy of money. First, the cool, indifferent man that will not give a penny; and second, the hot and eager man smelling a profit. Of all things, listen to him."

With that, the three mounted to a second-floor lodging in a very fine house on the Boulevard des Italiens, and at once found themselves amid elegant surroundings in the height of the fashion. A young man of eight-and-twenty, or thereabouts, came forward almost laughingly at sight of Léon de Lora, held out a hand to all appearance in the friendliest possible way to Bixiou, gave Gazonal a distant bow, and brought the three into his private office. All the man's bourgeois tastes lurked beneath the artistic decorations of the room in spite of the unimpeachable statuettes and numberless trifles appropriated to the uses of *petits appartements* by modern art, grown petty to supply the demand. Like most young men of business, Vauvinet was extremely carefully dressed, a man's clothes being as it were a kind of prospectus among them.

I have one almost due for four hundred and fifty. Cérizet will take it off you for a trifle; and that makes up the amount. But no tricks, Bixiou. I am going to Carabine's to-night, eh? Will you swear——?"

"Are we not friends again?" asked Bixiou, taking the banknote and the bill. "I give you my word of honor that you shall meet du Tillet to-night and plenty of others that have a mind to make their (rail) way."

Vauvinet came out upon the landing with the three friends, cajoling Bixiou to the last.

Bixiou listened with much seriousness while Gazonal on the way downstairs tried to open his eyes to the nature of the transaction just completed. Gazonal proved to him that if Cérizet, this crony of Vauvinet's, charged no more than twenty francs for discounting a bill for four hundred and fifty francs, then he (Bixiou) was borrowing money at the rate of forty per cent per annum.

Out upon the pavement Bixiou burst into a laugh, the laugh of a Parisian over a successful hoax, a soundless, joyless chuckle, a labial northeaster which froze Gazonal into silence.

"The grant of the concession to the railway will be postponed at the Chamber," he said; "we knew that yesterday from the *marcheuse* whom we met just now. And if I win five or six thousand francs at lansquenet, what is a loss of sixty or seventy francs so long as you have something to stake?"

"Lansquenet is another of the thousand facets of Paris life to-day," said Léon. "Wherefore, cousin, count upon our introducing you to one of the duchesses of the Rue Saint-Georges. In her house you see the aristocracy of lorettes, and may perhaps gain your lawsuit. But you cannot possibly show yourself with that Pyrenean crop, you look like a hedgehog; we will take you to Marius, close by in the Place de la Bourse. He is another of our humorists."

"What is the new humorist?"

"Here comes the anecdote," said Bixiou. "In 1800 a young wigmaker named Cabot came from Toulouse, and set up shop

"The three salons are three boudoirs," said Léon; "the manager has filled them with all that modern luxury can devise. There are fringed lambrequins over the windows, flower-stands everywhere, and silken couches, on which you await your turn and read the newspapers if all the dressing-rooms are occupied. As you come in, you begin to finger your waistcoat pockets, and imagine that they will charge you five francs at least; but no pocket is mulcted of more than half a franc if the hair is curled, or a franc if the hairdresser cuts it. Elegant toilet-tables stand among the flowers, there are jets of water playing, you see yourself reflected everywhere in huge mirrors. So try to look as if you were used to it. When the client comes in (Marius uses the elegant term 'client' instead of the common word 'customer'), when the client appears on the threshold, Marius appraises him at a glance; for him you are a 'head' more or less worthy of his interest. From Marius' point of view, there are no men—only heads."

"We will tune Marius to concert-pitch for you," said Bixiou, "if you will follow our lead."

When Gazonal appeared upon the scenes, Marius at once gave him an approving glance. "Regulus!" cried he, "take this head. Clip with the small shears first of all."

At a sign from Bixiou, Gazonal turned to the pupil. "Pardon me," he said, "I wish to have M. Marius himself."

Greatly flattered by this speech, Marius came forward, leaving the head on which he was engaged.

"I am at your service, I am just at an end. Be quite easy, my pupil will prepare you, I myself will decide on the style."

Marius, a little man, his face seamed with the smallpox, his hair frizzed after Rubini's fashion, was dressed in black from head to foot. He wore white cuffs and a diamond in his shirt-frill. He recognized Bixiou, and saluted him as an equal power.

"A commonplace head," he remarked to Léon, indicating the subject under his fingers, "a philistine. But what can one do? If one lived by art alone, one would end raving mad

"You are severe, M. Marius."

"I must do my duty by them, and teach them the mysteries of the art——"

"Then it is an art, is it?"

Marius stopped in indignation, the scissors in one hand, the comb in the other, and contemplated Gazonal in the glass."

"Monsieur, you talk like a —— child. And yet, from your accent, you seem to come from the South, the land of men of genius."

"Yes. It requires taste of a kind, I know," returned Gazonal.

"Pray say no more, monsieur! I looked for better things from you. I mean to say that a hairdresser (I do not say a *good* hairdresser, for one is either a hairdresser or one is not), a hairdresser is not so easily found as—what shall I say?—as—I really hardly know—as a Minister—(sit still) no, that will not do, for you cannot judge of the value of a Minister, the streets are full of them.—A Paganini?—no, that will not quite do.—A hairdresser, monsieur, a man that can read your character and your habits, must have that in him which makes a philosopher. And for the women! But there, women appreciate us, they know our value; they know that their triumphs are due to us when they come to us to prepare them for conquest . . . which is to say that a hairdresser is—but no one knows what he is. I myself, for instance, you will scarcely find a—well, without boasting, people know what I am. Ah! well, no, I think there should be a better yet. . . . Execution, that is the thing! Ah, if women would but give me a free hand; if I could but carry out all the ideas that occur to me!—for I have a tremendous imagination, you see—but women will not co-operate with you, they have notions of their own, they *will* run their fingers or their combs through the exquisite creations that ought to be engraved and recorded, for our works only live for a few hours, you see, sir! Ah! a great hairdresser should be something like what Carême and Vestris are in their lines.—

if the Government would only lend me one of the halls in the Louvre——"

"But I will mention it if you like. Nothing that can strike people's minds should be left undone."

"Oh! my friends are preparing articles, but I am afraid that they may go too far."

"Pshaw!" said Bixiou, "they will go nothing like as far as the Future——"

Dubourdieu eyed Bixiou askance and went on his way.

"Why, the man is a lunatic," said Gazonal, "moonstruck and mad."

"He has technical skill and knowledge," said Léon, "but Fourier has been the ruin of him. You have just seen one way in which ambition affects an artist. Too often here in Paris, in his desire to reach fame (which for an artist means fortune) by some short cut, he will borrow wings of circumstance; he will think to increase his stature by identifying himself with some Cause, or advocating some system, hoping in time to widen his coterie into a public. Such an one sets up to be a Republican, such another a Saint-Simonian, an

when it comes to a paradox, any one will be cut in pieces for it—he and his fortune. Well, here it is with systems as with practical matters. Impossible newspapers have consumed millions of francs in the last fifteen years. The very fact that you are in the right of it makes your lawsuit so difficult to win; taken together with the other fact that your prefect has his own private ends to gain, as you say."

"Can you understand how a clever man can live anywhere but in Paris when once he knows the psychology of the city?" asked Léon.

"Suppose that we take Gazonal to Mother Fontaine," suggested Bixiou, beckoning a hackney cab, "it would be a transition from the severe to the fantastic.—Drive to the Rue Vieille-du-Temple," he called to the man, and the three drove away in the direction of the Marais.

"What are you taking me to see?"

"Ocular demonstration of Bixiou's remarks," said Léon; "you are to be shown a woman who makes twenty thousand francs per annum by exploiting an idea."

"A fortune-teller," explained Bixiou, construing Gazonal's expression as a question. "Among folk that wish to know the future Mme. Fontaine is held to be even wiser than the late Mlle. Lenormand."

"She must be very rich!"

"She has fallen a victim to her idea since lotteries came into existence. In Paris, you see, great receipts always mean a large expenditure. Every hard head has a crack in it somewhere, like a safety-valve, as it were, for the steam. Every one that makes a great deal of money has his weaknesses or his fancies, a provision of nature probably to keep the balance."

"And now that lotteries are abolished?"

"Oh, well, she has a nephew, and is saving for him."

Arrived in the Rue Vieille-du-Temple, the three friends entered one of the oldest houses in the street, and discovered a tremulous staircase, with wooden steps laid on a foundation of concrete. Up they went in the perpetual twilight, through

s a fifty centime piece, that glowed like lamps in his head. 'heir gaze was intolerable. "The toad is a mysterious crea-ıre," as the late M. Lassailly used to say, after lying out in ıe fields to have the last word with a toad that fascinated im. Perhaps, all creation, man included, is summed up in ıe toad; for Lassailly tells us that it lives on almost inde-nitely, and it is well known that, of all animals, its mating sts the longest.

The black fowl's cage stood two feet away from a table cov-ed with a green cloth; a plank like a drawbridge lay be-reen.

When the woman, the least real of the strange company ›out a table worthy of Hoffmann, bade Gazonal "Cut!"—ıe honest manufacturer shuddered in spite of himself. The cret of the formidable power of such creatures lies in the nportance of the thing we seek to learn of them. Men and omen come to buy hope of them; and they know it.

The sibyl's cave was a good deal darker than the ante-ıamber, so much so, in fact, that you could not distinguish ıe color of the wall paper. The smoke-begrimed ceiling, so ır from reflecting, seemed rather to absorb such feeble light ı struggled in through a window blocked up with bleached ckly-looking plant-life; but all the dim daylight in the place ıll full upon the table at which the sorceress sat. Her arm-ıair and a chair for Gazonal completed the furniture of a ttle room cut in two by a garret, where Mme. Fontaine evi-ently slept. A little door stood ajar, and the murmur of a ot boiling on the fire reached Gazonal's ears. The sounds rom the kitchen, the compound of odors in which effluvia rom the sink predominated, called up an incongruous asso-iation of ideas—the necessities of everyday life and the sense f the supernatural. Disgust was mingled with curiosity. iazonal caught sight of the lowest step of the deal staircase hich led to the garret; he saw all these particulars at a lance, and his gorge rose. The kind of terror inspired by imilar scenes in romances and German plays was somehow › different; the absence of illusion, the prosaic sensation

caught him by the throat. He felt heavy and dizzy in that atmosphere; the gloom set his nerves on edge. With the very coxcombry of courage, he turned his eyes on the toad, and with sickening sensation of heat in the pit of the stomach, felt a sort of panic such as a criminal might feel at sight of a policeman. Then he sought comfort in a scrutiny of Mme. Fontaine, and found a pair of colorless, almost white eyes, with intolerable unwavering black pupils. The silence grew positively appalling.

"What does monsieur wish?" asked Mme. Fontaine. "His fortune for five francs, or ten francs, or the *grand jeu?*"

"Five francs is quite dear enough," said the Provençal, making unspeakable efforts to fight against the influences of the place. But just as he strove for self-possession, a diabolical cackle made him start on his chair. The black hen emitted a sound.

"Go away, my girl. Monsieur only wishes to spend five francs."

The hen seemed to understand, for when she stood within a step of the cards, she turned and walked solemnly back to

Mme. Fontaine scanned the palm put forth for her inspection with close attention. All this was done in a business-like way, with no attempt to give a supernatural color to the proceedings; a notary asking a client's wishes with regard to the drafting of a lease could not have been more straightforward. The cards being sufficiently shuffled, she asked Gazonal to cut and make them up into three packs. This done, she took up the packs, spread them out one above another, and eyed them as a gambler eyes the thirty-six numbers at roulette before he stakes his money.

Gazonal felt a cold chill freeze the marrow of his bones; he scarcely knew where he was; but his surprise grew more and more when this repulsive hag in the greasy, flabby green skull-cap, and false front that exhibited more black silk than hair curled into points of interrogation, began to tell him, in her rheumy voice, of all the events, even the most intimate history of his past life. She told him his tastes, his habits, his character, his ideas even as a child; she knew all that might have influenced his life. There was his projected marriage, for instance; she told him why and by whom it was broken off, giving him an exact description of the woman he had loved; and finally she named his district, and told him about his lawsuit, and so on, and so on.

Gazonal thought at first that the whole thing was a hoax got up for his benefit by his cousin; but the absurdity of this theory struck him almost at once, and he sat in gaping astonishment. Opposite sat the infernal power incarnate, a power that, from among all human shapes, had borrowed that one which has struck the imagination of poets and painters throughout all time as the most appalling—a cold-blooded, shrunken, asthmatic, toothless hag, with hard lips, flat nose, and pale eyes. Nothing was alive about Mme. Fontaine's face save the eyes; some gleam from the depths of the future or the fires of hell sparkled in them.

Gazonal, scarcely knowing what he said, interrupted her to ask the uses of the fowl and the toad.

"To foretell the future. The 'consultant' himself scatters

some seeds over the cards; Cleopatra comes to pick them up; and Ashtaroth creeps over them to seek the food that the client gives him. Their wonderful intelligence is never deceived. Would you like to see them at work and hear your future read? It costs a hundred francs."

But Gazonal, dismayed by Ashtaroth's expression, bade the terrible Mme. Fontaine good-day, and fled into the next room. He was damp with perspiration; he seemed to feel an unclean spirit brooding over him.

"Let us go out of this," he said. "Has either of you ever consulted this witch?"

"I never think of taking a step in life until Ashtaroth has given his opinion," said Léon, "and I am always the better for it."

"I am still expecting the honest competence promised me by Cleopatra," added Bixiou.

"I am in a fever!" cried the child of the South. "If I believed all that you tell me, I should believe in witchcraft, in a supernatural power."

"It can only be natural," put in Bixiou. "Half the artists

fortunes on the cards; he fell into criminal courses, yet he never foresaw his own arrest, conviction, and sentence. Mme. Fontaine is right eight times out of ten, yet she never could tell that she should lose her stake in the lottery."

"It is the same with magnetism," Bixiou remarked. "A man cannot magnetize himself."

"Good! Now comes magnetism. What next! Do you really know everything?"

"My friend Gazonal, before you can laugh at everything, you must know everything," said Bixiou with gravity. "For my own part, I have known Paris since I was a boy, and my pencil helps me to laugh for a livelihood at the rate of five caricatures per month. So I very often laugh at an idea in which I have faith."

"Now, let us go in for something else," said Léon. "Let us drive to the Chamber and arrange the cousin's business."

"This," continued Bixiou, burlesquing Odry and Gaillard, "is High Comedy; we will draw out the first great speaker that we meet in the Salle des Pas-Perdus; and there, as everywhere else, you shall hear the Parisian harping upon two eternal strings—Self-interest and Vanity."

As they stepped into the cab again, Léon noticed a man driving rapidly past, and signaled his wish to speak a word with the newcomer.

"It is Publicola Masson," he told Bixiou; "I will just ask him for an interview this evening at five o'clock when the House rises. The cousin shall see the queerest of all characters."

"Who is it?" asked Gazonal, while Léon went across to speak to his man.

"A chiropodist, that will cut your corns by contract, an author of a treatise on chiropody. If the Republicans triumph for six months, he will without doubt have a place in history."

"And does he keep a carriage?"

"No one but a millionaire can afford to go about on foot, here, my friend."

"The Chamber!" Léon called to the driver.

"Which, sir?"

"The Chamber of Deputies," said Léon, exchanging a smile with Bixiou.

"Paris is beginning to confuse me," sighed Gazonal.

"To show you its immensity—moral, political, and literary—we are copying the Roman cicerone that shows you a thumb of the statue of St. Peter, which you take for a life-size figure until you find out that a finger is more than a foot long. You have not so much as measured one of the toes of Paris yet——"

"And observe, cousin Gazonal, that we are taking things as they come, we are not selecting."

"You shall have a Belshazzar's feast to-night; you shall see Paris, *our* Paris, playing at lansquenet, staking a hundred thousand francs without winking an eye."

Fifteen minutes later their hackney cab set them down by the flight of steps before the Chamber of Deputies on that side of the Pont de la Concorde which leads to discord.

"I thought the Chambers were unapproachable," said Ga-

self and the lobby, where the reporters of the *Moniteur* are at work while the House is sitting, with some persons attached to the Chamber.

"The Minister is here," the usher was telling Léon as Gazonal came up, "but I do not know whether M. Giraud has gone or not; I will see——" He opened one of the folding doors through which no one is allowed to pass save deputies, ministers, or royal commissioners, when a man came out, young as yet, as it seemed to Gazonal, in spite of his forty-eight years. To this newcomer the usher pointed out Léon de Lora.

"Aha! you here!" he said, shaking hands with Léon and Bixiou. "You rascals! what do you want in the innermost sanctuary of law?"

"Gad! we have come for a lesson in the art of humbug," said Bixiou. "One gets rusty if one does not."

"Then let us go out into the garden," said the newcomer, not knowing that Gazonal was one of the company.

Gazonal was at a loss how to classify the well-dressed stranger in plain black from head to foot, with a ribbon and an order; but he followed to the terrace by the river once known as the Quai Napoléon. Out in the garden the *ci-devant* young man gave vent to a laugh, suppressed since his appearance in the Salle des Pas-Perdus.

"Why, what is the matter with you?" asked Léon.

"My dear friend, we are driven to tell terrific lies with incredible coolness to prove the sincerity of the constitutional government. Now I myself have my moods. There are days when I can lie like a political programme, and others when I cannot keep my countenance. This is one of my hilarious days. Now the Opposition has called upon the chief secretary to disclose secrets of diplomacy which he would not impart if they were in office, and at this moment he is on his legs preparing to go through a gymnastic performance. And as he is an honest man that will not lie on his own account, he said confidentially to me before he mounted to the breach, 'I have not a notion what to tell them.' So, when I saw him

there, an uncontrollable desire to laugh seized me, and I went out, for you cannot very well have your laugh out on the Ministerial benches, where my youth occasionally revisits me unseasonably."

"At last!" cried Gazonal. "At last! I have found an honest man in Paris. You must be indeed great!" he continued, looking at the stranger.

"I say, who is this gentleman?" inquired the other, scrutinizing Gazonal as he spoke.

"A cousin of mine," Léon put in hastily. "I can answer for his silence and loyalty as for my own. We have come here on his account; he has a lawsuit on hand, it depends on your department; his prefect simply wishes to ruin him, and we have come to see you about it and to prevent the Council of State from confirming injustice."

"Who is the chairman?"

"Massol."

"Good."

"And our friends Claude Vignon and Giraud are on the committee," added Bixiou.

"I say, who is that?"

"The Comte de Rastignac; he is the head of the department in which your affair is going on."

"A Minister! Is that all?"

"He is an old friend of ours as well, and he has three hundred thousand livres a year, and he is a peer of France, and the King has given him the title of Count. He is Nucingen's son-in-law, and one of the two or three statesmen produced by the Revolution of July. Now and then, however, he finds office dull, and comes out to have a laugh with us."

"But, look here, cousin, you did not tell us that you were on the other side down yonder," said Léon, taking Gazonal by the arm. "How stupid you are! One deputy more or less to the Right or Left, will you sleep any the softer for that?"

"We are on the side of the others——"

"Let them be," said Bixiou—Monrose himself could not have spoken the words more comically—"let them be, they have Providence on their side, and Providence will look after them without your assistance and in spite of themselves.—A manufacturer is bound to be a necessarian."

"Good! here comes Maxime with Canalis and Giraud," cried Léon.

"Come, friend Gazonal; the promised actors are arriving on the scene."

The three went towards the newcomers, who to all appearance were lounging on the terrace.

"Have they sent you about your business that you are doing like this?" inquired Bixiou, addressing Giraud.

"No. We have come out for a breath of air till the ballot is over."

"And how did the chief secretary get out of it?"

"He was magnificent!" said Canalis.

"Magnificent!" from Giraud.

"Magnificent!" from Maxime.

"I say! Right, Left, and Centre all of one mind!"

"Each of us has a different idea in his head though," Maxime de Trailles remarked. (Maxime was a Ministerialist.)

"Very good," said he, "I agree to M. le Comte de Trailles' proposals. I will ask the question, but it will be pressed hard."

"Then we shall have the House with us on the question, for a man of your capacity and eloquence 'always has the ear of the House,'" returned Canalis. "I will undertake to crush you and no mistake."

"You very likely will bring about a change of ministry, for on such ground you can do anything you like with the House, and you will be 'the man of the situation'——"

"Maxime has hocussed them both," said Léon, turning to his cousin. "That fine fellow is as much at home in parliamentary intrigue as a fish in water."

"Who is he?" asked Gazonal.

"He *was* a scamp; he *is* in a fair way to be an ambassador," answered Bixiou.

"Giraud," said Léon, "do not go until you have asked Rastignac to say something, as he promised me he would, about a lawsuit that will come up for decision before you the day after to-morrow; it affects my cousin here. I will come round to-morrow morning to see you about it." And the three friends followed the three politicians, at a certain distance, to the Salle des Pas-Perdus.

"Now, cousin, look at the two yonder," said Léon, pointing out a retired and very famous Minister and the leader of the Left Centre, "those are two speakers that always 'have the ear of the House'; they have been called in joke the leaders of His Majesty's Opposition; they have the ear of the House, so much so indeed that they very often pull it."

"It is four o'clock. Let us go back to the Rue de Berlin," said Bixiou.

"Yes. You have just seen the heart of the Government; now you ought to see the parasites and ascarides, the tapeworm, or, since one must call him by his name—the Republican."

The friends were no sooner packed into their cab than Gazonal looked maliciously at his cousin and Bixiou; there was

And why complain [illegible]
by which you will [illegible]
think yourself a [illegible]
rapacious, less [illegible]
up with vanity [illegible]
marionettes?"

"Try to [illegible]

"Poor fe[illegible] [illegible]gged I
your vote a[illegible], as i[illegible]

"Yes: [illegible] the only
at *himself*."

"Poor [illegible]ed Bixio
I have [illegible] but laug
snapping [illegible]—Ah, if yo[illegible]
of someone [illegible]. Do you
driving a [illegible] out of his [illegible]

At this point they reached L[illegible]
its [illegible] diagonal short [illegible]
[illegible] the day it be[illegible]
[illegible] drawing *him* [illegible]
[illegible] five, Léon de Lo[illegible]
[illegible] great bewilde[illegible]
[illegible]-and-one supe[illegible]
[illegible] when [illegible]

"How are things going?" inquired Léon, holding out a foot, previously washed by the servant.

"Well, I am compelled to take a couple of pupils, two young fellows that have given up surgery in despair and taken to chiropody. They were starving, and yet they are not without brains——"

"Oh, I was not speaking of matters pedestrian; I was asking after your political programme——"

Masson's glance at Gazonal was more expressive than any spoken inquiry.

"Oh! speak out; that is my cousin, and he is all but one of you; he fancies that he is a Legitimist."

"Oh, well, we are getting on; we are getting on. All Europe will be with us in five years' time. Switzerland and Italy are in full ferment, and we are ready for the opportunity if it comes. Here, for instance, we have fifty thousand armed men, to say nothing of two hundred thousand penniless citizens——"

"Pooh!" said Léon, "how about the fortifications?"

"Pie crusts made to be broken," Masson retorted. "In the first place, we shall never allow artillery to come within range; and in the second, we have a little contrivance more effectual than all the fortifications in the world, an invention which we owe to the doctor who cured folk faster than all the rest of the faculty could kill them while his machine was in operation."

"What a rate you are going!" said Gazonal. The sight of Publicola made his flesh creep.

"Oh, there is no help for it. We come after Robespierre and Saint-Just, to improve upon them. They were timid, and you see what came of it—an emperor, the elder branch and then the younger. The Mountain did not prune the social tree sufficiently."

"Look here, you that will be consul, or tribune, or something like it, don't forget that I have asked for your protection any time these ten years," said Bixiou.

"Nothing will happen to you. We shall need jesters, and you could take up Barère's job."

"I pare their nails," said the Republican-Radical, shutting up his case of instruments and finishing the joke himself. Then with a very polite bow he withdrew.

"Is it possible? In 1845?" cried Gazonal.

"If we had time we could show you all the characters of 1793; and you should talk with them. You have just seen Marat. Well, we know Fouquier-Tinville, Collot-d'Herbois, Robespierre, Chabot, Fouché, Barras, and even a magnificent Mme. Roland."

"Ah, well, tragedy has not been left unrepresented on this stage," said Gazonal.

"It is six o'clock. We will take you to see Odry in *Les Saltimbanques* this evening, but first we must call upon Mme. Cadine, an actress, very intimate with Massol your chairman; you must pay your court assiduously to her to-night."

"As it is absolutely necessary that you should conciliate this power, I will just give you a few hints," added Bixiou. "Do you employ women in your factory?"

"Assuredly."

"That was all that I wanted to know," said Bixiou. "You are not a married man, you are a great——"

"Yes," interrupted Gazonal. "You have guessed; women are my weak point."

"Very good. If you decide to execute a little manœuvre which I will teach you, you shall know something of the charm of intimacy with an actress without spending one farthing."

Bixiou, intent on playing a mischievous trick upon the cautious Gazonal, had scarcely finished tracing out his part for him, when they reached Mme. Cadine's house in the Rue de la Victoire. But a hint was enough for the southern brain, as will shortly be seen.

They climbed the stair of a tolerably fine house, and discovered Jenny Cadine finishing her dinner. She was to play in the second piece at the Gymnase. Gazonal introduced to the power, Léon and Bixiou went aside ostensibly to see a new piece of furniture, really to leave the two alone to-

... gaze
... room furnit
... rators, and
... dining-room
... can leave
... s!——" he be
... it is. It cann
... until he is a M
... an!" exclaimed
... a provincial he
... thought the actres
... Carabine now."
... e in. "Well, dear
... rabine's this evenin
..."

... monsieur be there?

... madame," said Gazona
... Massol will be there to
... and what has that to
... us go, my treasures.
... nal handed her down to
... the door, and squeezed
... wrung her fingers.

At half-past eleven, after the play, a hackney cab brought the trio to Mlle. Séraphine Sinet's abode. Every well-known lorette either takes a pseudonym, or somebody bestows one upon her, and Séraphine is better known as Carabine, possibly because she never fails to bring down her "pigeon." She had come to be almost indispensable to du Tillet the famous banker, and member of the Left Centre, and at that time she was living in charming rooms in the Rue Saint-Georges. There are certain houses in Paris that seem fated to carry on a tradition; this particular house had already seen seven reigns of courtesans. A stockbroker had installed Suzanne du Val-Noble in it somewhere about the year 1827. The notorious Esther had here driven the Baron de Nucingen to commit the only follies of his life. Here Florine, and she whom some facetiously call the "*late* Madame Schontz," had shone in turn, and finally when du Tillet tired of his wife he had taken the little modern house and established Carabine in it; her lively wit, her off-hand manners, her brilliant shamelessness provided him with a counterpoise for the cares of life, domestic, public, and financial.

Ten covers were always laid; dinner was served (and splendidly) whether du Tillet and Carabine were at home or no. Artists, men of letters, journalists, and frequenters of the house dined there, and there was play of an evening. More than one member of the Chamber came hither to seek the pleasure that is paid for in Paris by its weight in gold. A few feminine eccentrics, certain falling stars of doubtful significance that sparkle in the Parisian firmament, appeared here in all the splendor of their toilettes. The conversation was good, for talk was unrestrained, and anything might be said and was said. Carabine, a rival of the no less celebrated Malaga, had fallen heir as it were to several salons; the coteries belonging to Florine (now Mme. Nathan), Tullia (afterwards Comtesse du Bruel), and Madame Schontz (who became the wife of President du Ronceret) had all rallied to Carabine.

Gazonal made but one remark as he came in, but his ob-

"And what should *I* have?" asked the actress.

"Why, my whole fortune!" cried Gazonal, shrewdly of the opinion that to offer all was to offer nothing.

Massol, Claude Vignon, du Tillet, Maxime de Trailles, Nucingen, Du Bruel, Malaga, M. and Mme. Gaillard, Vauvinet, and a host of others crowded in.

In the course of conversation, Massol and Gazonal went to the bottom of the dispute; the former, without committing himself, remarked that the report was not yet drawn up, and that citizens might put confidence in the lights and the independent opinion of the Council of State. After this cut-and-dried response, Gazonal, losing hope, judged it necessary to win over the charming Jenny Cadine, with whom he fell head over ears in love. Léon de Lora and Bixiou left their victim in the clutches of the most mischief-loving woman in their singular set, for Jenny Cadine was the famous Déjazet's sole rival.

At the supper-table Gazonal was fascinated by the work of Froment Meurice, the modern Benvenuto Cellini—by costly plate, with contents worth the interest on the wrought silver that held them. The two perpetrators of the hoax had taken care to sit as far away from him as possible; but furtively they watched the wily actress' progress. Ensnared by that insidious hint of new furniture, she had set herself to carry Gazonal home with her; and never did lamb in the Fête-Dieu procession submit to be led by his St. John the Baptist with a better grace than Gazonal showed in his obedience to this siren.

Three days afterwards, Léon and Bixiou having meanwhile seen and heard nothing of their friend, repaired to his lodging about two o'clock in the afternoon

"Well, cousin, the decision has been given in your favor."

"Alas! it makes no difference now, cousin," Gazonal answered, turning his melancholy eyes upon them; "I have turned Republican again."

"*Quésaco?*" asked Léon.

"I have nothing left, not even enough to pay my counsel.

"You cannot say that we h
have educated you, rescued y
—amused you," said Bixiou.

"And nothing to pay!" ad
which a street-boy conveys th
successfully "done."

PARIS, *November* 1845.

PARISIANS IN THE COUNTRY

GAUDISSART THE GREAT

To Madame la Duchesse de Castries.

Is not the commercial traveler—a being unknown in earlier times—one of the most curious types produced by the manners and customs of this age? And is it not his peculiar function to carry out in a certain class of things the immense transition which connects the age of material development with that of intellectual development? Our epoch will be the link between the age of isolated forces rich in original creativeness, and that of the uniform but leveling force which gives monotony to its products, casting them in masses, and following out an unifying idea—the ultimate expression of social communities. After the Saturnalia of intellectual communism, after the last struggles of many civilizations concentrating all the treasures of the world on a single spot, must not the darkness of barbarism invariably supervene?

The commercial traveler is to ideas what coaches are to men and things. He carts them about, he sets them moving, brings them into impact. He loads himself at the centre of enlightenment with a supply of beams which he scatters among torpid communities. This human *pyrophoros* is an ignorant instructor, mystified and mystifying, a disbelieving priest who talks all the more glibly of arcana and dogmas. A strange figure! The man has seen everything, he knows everything, he is acquainted with everybody. Saturated in Parisian vice, he can assume the rusticity of the countryman. Is he not the link that joins the village to the capital, though himself not essentially either Parisian or provincial?

... normal frame which is r

He is bound to be an obs
Is he not constantly compel
and guess his mode of actio
his solvency; and, in order t
the chances of profit? This
matters of business makes hi
tles questions out of hand, an
theatres and actors, and of tl
he knows all the good and all
de actu et visu. He would ste
the abode of virtue or of vi
eloquence of a hot-water tap t
equal readiness stop short or b
his stream of ready-made ph
and producing on the victim th
is full of pertinent anecdotes
wears a chain with seals and tri
fry," is looked at as a *milord*
himself to be "got over"—a w
exactly when to slap his pocke
so as not to be taken for a "sn
a suspicious race—of the house

As to his enor...

can compare with the swiftness of his rush when he scents a commission, the neatness with which he trips up a rival to gain upon him, the keenness with which he feels, sniffs, and spies out an opportunity for "doing business." How many special talents must such a man possess! And how many will you find in any country of these diplomates of the lower class, profound negotiators, representatives of the calico, jewelry, cloth, or wine trades, and often with more acumen than ambassadors, who are indeed for the most part but superficial?

Nobody in France suspects the immense power constantly wielded by the commercial traveler, the bold pioneer of the transactions which embody to the humblest hamlet the genius of civilization and Parisian inventiveness in its struggle against the common sense, the ignorance, or the habits of rustic life. We must not overlook these ingenious laborers, by whom the intelligence of the masses is kneaded, moulding the most refractory material by sheer talk, and resembling in this the persevering polishers whose file licks the hardest porphyry smooth. Do you want to know the power of the tongue, and the coercive force of mere phrases on the most tenacious coin known—that of the country freeholder in his rustic lair?—Then listen to what some high dignitary of Paris industry can tell you, for whose benefit these clever pistons of the steam engine called Speculation work, and strike, and squeeze.

"Monsieur," said the director-cashier-manager-secretary-and-chairman of a famous Fire Insurance Company to an experienced economist, "in the country, out of five hundred thousand francs to be collected in renewing insurances, not more than fifty thousand are paid willingly. The other four hundred and fifty thousand are only extracted by the persistency of our agents, who go to dun the customers who are in arrears till they have renewed their policies, and frighten and excite them by fearful tales of fires.—Eloquence, the gift of the gab, is, in fact, nine-tenths of the matter in the ways and means of working our business."

To talk—to make oneself heard—is not this seduction? A nation with two Chambers, a woman with two ears, alike are

circus, and what a weapon!

A daring seaman, he emba
go and fish for money, five
say, in the frozen ocean, the
France! The task before hin
process and painless operati
rural hiding-places. The pr
harpoon or the torch; it is o
the landing-net—the gentlest

Can you ever think again w
of phrases which begins anew
—You know the genus; now

There dwells in Paris a mat
his kind, a man possessing in t
tion indispensable to success in
vitriol mingles with bird-lime;
besmear it and stick it to the
hardest limestone.

His "line" was hats—he *trav*
the skill with which he ensnar
commercial celebrity that deale
novelties invented in Paris wor
to undertake their business T

fast or a dinner in solitude was a pleasure and a debauch. He led the life of a sovereign—nay, better, of a journalist. And was he not the living organ of Paris trade?

His name was Gaudissart; and his fame, his influence, and the praises poured on him had gained him the epithet of Gaudissart the Great. Wherever he made his appearance, whether in a counting house or an inn, in a drawing-room or a diligence, in a garret or a bank, each one would exclaim on seeing him, "Ah, ha! here is Gaudissart the Great!"

Never was a nickname better suited to the appearance, the manners, the countenance, the voice, or the language of a man. Everything smiled on the Traveler, and he smiled on all. *Similia Similibus;* he was for homœopathy: Puns, a horse-laugh, the complexion of a jolly friar, a Rabelaisian aspect; dress, mien, character, and face combined to give his whole person a stamp of jollification and ribaldry.

Blunt in business, good-natured and capital fun, you would have known him at once for a favorite of the *grisette*—a man who can climb with a grace to the top of a coach, offer a hand to a lady in difficulties over getting out, jest with the postilion about his bandana, and sell him a hat; smile at the inn-maid, taking her by the waist—or by the fancy; who at table will imitate the gurgle of a bottle by tapping his cheek while putting his tongue in it, knows to make beer go off by drawing the air between his lips, or can hit a champagne glass a sharp blow with a knife without breaking it, saying to the others, "Can you do that?"—who chaffs shy travelers, contradicts well-informed men, is supreme at table, and secures all the best bits.

A clever man too, he could on occasion put aside all such pleasantries, and look very serious when, throwing away the end of his cigar, he would look out on a town and say, "I mean to see what the folks here are made of." Then Gaudissart was the most cunning and shrewd of ambassadors. He knew how to be the official with the préfet, the capitalist with the banker, orthodox and monarchical with the royalist, the blunt citizen with the citizen—in short, all things to all men,

Nay, do not laugh! A word is as good as an idea in a country where the ticket on the bale is thought more of than the contents. Have we not seen the book trade thriving on the word *picturesque* when literature had sealed the doom of the word *fantastic*.

Consequently, the excise has levied a tax on the intellect; it has exactly measured the acreage of advertisements, has assessed the prospectus, and weighed thought—Rue de la Paix *Hôtel du Timbre* (the Stamp Office). On being constituted taxable goods, the intellect and its products were bound to obey the method used in manufacturing undertakings. Thus the ideas conceived after drinking in the brain of some of those apparently idle Parisians who do battle on intellectual ground while emptying a bottle or carving a pheasant's thigh, were handed over the day after their mental birth to commercial travelers, whose business it was to set forth, with due skill, *urbi et orbi*, the fried bacon of advertisement and prospectus by which the departmental mouse is tempted into the editor's trap, and becomes known in the vulgar tongue as a subscriber, or a shareholder, a corresponding member, or, perhaps, a backer or a part owner—and being always a flat.

"What a flat I am!" has more than one poor investor exclaimed after being tempted by the prospect of *founding* something, which has finally proved to be the founding that melts down some thousand or twelve hundred francs.

"Subscribers are the fools who cannot understand that it costs more to forge ahead in the realm of intellect than to travel all over Europe," is the speculator's view.

So there is a constant struggle going on between the dilatory public which declines to pay the Paris taxes and the collectors who, living on their percentages, baste that public with new ideas, lard it with undertakings, roast it with prospectuses, spit it on flattery, and at last eat it up with some new sauce in which it gets caught and intoxicated like a fly in treacle. What has not been done in France since 1830 to stimulate the zeal, the conceit of the *intelligent* and *progres-*

rape of ideas which
like the slave merc
ternal brain at a te
Greenhorn, their be
if not amused, beh
gold.

This mania of th
and this was how.
on life and property
offered him extraord
cepted. The bargain
man was weaned of t
to the Society, who fr
clothes, explained the
him its lingo, showed l
omized the particular
work, stuffed him with
tees, stocked him with
put an edge on the
France. The puppet
ished on him by Mons

The directors of th
their praises of Gaudi
attentio

to tout for subscriptions. The *Globe,* the organ of the doctrines of Saint-Simon, and the *Mouvement,* a Republican paper, invited Gaudissart the Great to their private offices and promised him, each, ten francs a head on every subscriber if he secured a thousand, but only five francs a head if he could catch no more than five hundred. As the *line* of the political paper did not interfere with that of the Insurance Company, the bargain was concluded. At the same time, Gaudissart demanded an indemnity of five hundred francs for the week he must spend in "getting up" the doctrine of Saint-Simon, pointing out what efforts of memory and brain would be necessary to enable him to become thoroughly conversant with this *article,* and to talk of it so coherently as to avoid, said he, "putting his foot in it."

He made no claim on the Republicans. In the first place, he himself had a leaning to Republican notions—the only views according to the Gaudissart philosophy that could bring about rational equality; and then Gaudissart had ere now dabbled in the plots of the French *carbonari.* He had even been arrested, but released for lack of evidence; and finally, he pointed out to the bankers of the paper that since July he had allowed his moustache to grow, and that he now only needed a particular shape of cap and long spurs to be representative of the Republic.

So for a week he went every morning to be Saint-Simonized at the *Globe* office, and every evening he haunted the bureau of the Insurance Company to learn the elegancies of financial slang. His aptitude and memory were so good, that he was ready to start by the 15th of April, the date at which he usually set out on his first annual circuit.

Two large commercial houses, alarmed at the downward tendency of trade, tempted the ambitious Gaudissart still to undertake their agency, and the King of Commercial Travelers showed his clemency in consideration of old friendship and of the enormous percentage he was to take.

"Listen to me, my little Jenny," said he, riding in a hackney cab with a pretty little flower-maker.

ew up before a pretty house, newly built in the
. where Gaudissart and Jenny went up to the
Here resided Mademoiselle Jenny Courand, who
y supposed to have been privately married to
report which the traveler did not deny. To
power over him, Jenny Courand compelled him
thousand little attentions, always threatening to
n to his fate if he failed in the least of them.
was to write to her from each town he stopped
an account of every action.

w many *Children* will you want to furnish my
id she, throwing off her shawl and sitting down by
.

five sous on each subscription."

tty joke! Do you expect to make me a rich woman
s at a time. Unless you are a Wandering Jew and
pocket sewn up tight."

enny, I shall get thousands of *Children*. Just think,
ones have never had a paper of their own. However,
eat simpleton to try to explain the economy of bus-
ou—you understand nothing about such matters."

ray, then, Gaudissart, if I am such a gaby, why do
me?"

se you are such a sublime gaby! Listen, Jenny.
f I can get people to take the *Globe* and the *Mouve-*
l to pay their insurances, instead of earning a miser-
or ten thousand francs a year by trundling around
n in a show, I may make twenty to thirty thousand
t of one round."

e my stays, Gaudissart, and pull straight—don't
skew."

hen," said the commercial traveler, as he admired
satin shoulders, "I shall be a shareholder in the
ke Finot, a friend of mine, the son of a hatter, who
thousand francs a year, and will get himself made
And when you think of little Popinot!—By the
rgot to tell you that Monsieur Popinot was yester-

"You will be caught over your newspapers. I will lay a wager that you will not get as far as Poitiers without being done."

"I am ready to bet, my jewel."

"A shawl!"

"Done. If I lose the shawl, I will go back to trade and hats. But, get the better of Gaudissart? Never! never!"

And the illustrious commercial traveler struck on attitude in front of Jenny, looking at her haughtily, one hand in his waistcoat, and his head half turned in a Napoleonic pose.

"How absurd you are! What have you been eating this evening?"

Gaudissart was a man of eight-and-thirty, of middle height, burly and fat, as a man is who is accustomed to go about in mail-coaches; his face was as round as a pumpkin, florid, and with regular features resembling the traditional type adopted by sculptors in every country for their statues of Abundance, of Law, Force, Commerce, and the like. His prominent stomach was pear-shaped, and his legs were thin, but he was wiry and active. He picked up Jenny, who was half undressed, and carried her to her bed.

"Hold your tongue, *free woman,*" said he. "Ah, you don't know anything about the free woman and Saint-Simonism, and antagonism, and Fourierism, and criticism, and determined push—well it is—in short, it is ten francs on every subscription, Madame Gaudissart."

"On my honor, you are going crazy, Gaudissart."

"Always more and more crazy about you," said he, tossing his hat on to the sofa.

Next day, after breakfasting in style with Jenny Courand, Gaudissart set out on horseback to call in all the market towns which he had been particularly instructed to work up by the various companies to whose success he was devoting his genius. After spending forty-five days in beating the country lying between Paris and Blois, he stayed for a fortnight in this little city, devoting the time to writing letters and visiting the neighboring towns. The day before leaving

tions set forth. Tl
Between Paris and
towards the middle c
millions infinitely s
nicely, as usual; it i
rattle, I can always e
sixty-two Ternaux sl
don't know what they
back on the sheep.

"As to the newspap
another pair of shoes.
those good people take
I have got no more t!
that in my whole jou.
in one town. These r
all; you talk to them,
way of thinking, and y
thing that exists. Do y
bit of it. And if he has
to grow a dozen cabbag
your man will talk of t
ation, and crops, and co
I waste my time and

new doctrines to men who seem likely to have a leaning to such quirks, you might think it was a proposal to burn their house down. I tell them it is the coming thing, the most advantageous to their interests, the principle of work by which nothing is lost;—that men have oppressed men long enough, that woman is a slave, that we must strive to secure the triumph of the great Idea of thrift, and achieve a more rational co-ordination of Society—in short, all the rhodomontade at my command. All in vain! As soon as I start on this subject, these country louts shut up their cupboards as if I had come to steal something, and beg me to be off.

"What fools these owls are! The *Globe* is nowhere.—I told them so. I said, 'You are too advanced. You are getting forward, and that is all very well; but you must have something to show. In the provinces they want to see results.' However, I have got a hundred *Globes;* and, seeing the density of these country noodles, it is really a miracle. But I promise them such a heap of fine things, that be hanged if I know how the Globules, or Globists, or Globites, or Globians are ever going to give them. However, as they assured me that they would arrange the world far better than it is arranged at present, I lead the way and prophesy good things at ten francs per head.

"There is a farmer who thought it must have to do with soils, by reason of the name, and I rammed the *Globe* down his throat; he will take to it, I feel sure; he has a prominent forehead, and men with prominent foreheads are always ideologists.

"But as to the *Children!* give me the *Children*. I got two thousand Children between Paris and Blois—a nice little turn! And there is less waste of words. You show the picture to the mother on the sly, so that the child wants to see; then, of course, the child sees; and he tugs at mamma's skirts till he gets his paper, because 'Daddy has hisn paper.' Mamma's gown cost twenty francs, and she does not want it torn by the brat; the paper costs but six francs, that is cheaper; so the subscription is dragged out. It is a capital, and meets

a real want—something between the sugar-plum and the picture-book, the two eternal cravings of childhood. And they can read, too, these frenzied brats.

"Here, at the table-d'hôte, I had a dispute about newspapers and my opinions. I was sitting, peacefully eating, by the side of a man in a white hat who was reading the *Débats*. Said I to myself, 'I must give him a taste of my eloquence. Here is a man who is all for the dynasty; I must try to catch him. Such a triumph would be a splendid forecast of success as a Minister.' So I set to work, beginning by praising his paper. It was a precious long job, I can tell you. From one thing to another I began to overrule my man, giving him four-horse speeches, arguments in F sharp, and all the precious rhodomontade. Everybody was listening, and I saw a man with *July* in his moustaches, ready to bite for the *Mouvement*. But, by ill-luck, I don't know how I let slip the word *ganache* (old woman). Away went my dynastic white hat—and a bad hat too, a Lyons hat, half silk and half cotton—with the bit between his teeth in a fury. So I put on my grand air—you know it—and I say to him, 'Heyday, mon-

try my hand on the deadliest country from the point of view of intelligence and speculation. But on the honor of Gaudissart, they will be done, they *shall* be done! Done brown! By-bye, little one; love me long, and be true to me. Fidelity through thick and thin is one of the characteristics of the free woman. Who kisses your eyes?

"Yours, FELIX for ever."

Five days later Gaudissart set out one morning from the *Faisan* hotel, where he put up at Tours, and went to Vouvray, a rich and populous district where the public mind seemed to him to be open to conviction. He was trotting along the river quay on his nag, thinking no more of the speeches he was about to make than an actor thinks of the part he has played a hundred times. Gaudissart the Great cantered on, admiring the landscape, and thinking of nothing, never dreaming that the happy valleys of Vouvray were to witness the overthrow of his commercial infallibility.

It will here be necessary to give the reader some insight into the public spirit of Touraine. The peculiar wit of a sly romancer, full of banter and epigram, which stamps every page of Rabelais' work, is the faithful expression of the Tourangeau nature, of an intellect as keen and polished as it must inevitably be in a province where the Kings of France long held their court; an ardent, artistic, poetical, and luxurious nature, but prompt to forget its first impulse. The softness of the atmosphere, the beauty of the climate, a certain ease of living and simplicity of manners, soon stifle the feeling for art, narrow the most expansive heart, and corrode the most tenacious will.

Transplant the native of Touraine, and his qualities develop and lead to great things, as has been proved in the most dissimilar ways, by Rabelais and by Semblançay; by Plantin the printer and by Descartes; by Boucicault, the Napoleon of his day; by Pinaigrier, who painted the greater part of our Cathedral glass; by Verville and Courier. But, left at home, the countryman of Touraine, so remarkable elsewhere, re-

mains like the Indian on his rug, like the Turk on his divan. He uses his wit to make fun of his neighbor, to amuse himself, and to live happy to the end of his days. Touraine is the true Abbey of Thelema, so much praised in Gargantua's book. Consenting nuns may be found there, as in the poet's dream, and the good cheer sung so loudly by Rabelais is supreme.

As to his indolence, it is sublime, and well characterized in the popular witticism: "Tourangeau, will you have some broth?"—"Yes."—"Then bring your bowl."—"I am no longer hungry."

Is it to the glee of the vinedresser, to the harmonious beauty of the loveliest scenery in France, or to the perennial peace of a province which has always escaped the invading armies of the foreigner, that the soft indifference of those mild and easy habits is due? To this question there is no answer. Go yourself to that Turkey in France, and there you will stay, indolent, idle, and happy. Though you were as ambitious as Napoleon, or a poet like Byron, an irresistible, indescribable influence would compel you to keep your poetry to yourself,

the district, the jester whose reputation and nature alike made it incumbent on him to keep his neighbor's spirits up. This rustic Figaro, a retired dyer, was the happy possessor of seven or eight thousand francs a year, of a pretty house on the slope of a hill, of a plump little wife, and of robust health. For ten years past he had had nothing to do but to take care of his garden and his wife, to get his daughter married, to play his game of an evening, to keep himself informed of all the scandal that came within his jurisdiction, to give trouble at elections, to squabble with the great landowners, and arrange big dinners; to air himself on the quay, inquire what was going on in the town, and bother the priest; and, for dramatic interest, to look out for the sale of a plot of ground that cut into the ring fence of his vineyard. In short, he lived the life of Touraine, the life of a small country town.

At the same time, he was the most important of the minor notabilities of the place, and the leader of the small proprietors—a jealous and envious class, chewing the cud of slander and calumny against the aristocracy, and repeating them with relish, grinding everything down to one level, hostile to every form of superiority, scorning it indeed, with the admirable coolness of ignorance.

Monsieur Vernier—so this little great man of the place was named—was finishing his breakfast, between his wife and his daughter, when Gaudissart made his appearance in the dining-room—one of the most cheerful dining-rooms for miles round, with a view from the windows over the Loire and the Cher.

"Is it to Monsieur Vernier himself that I have the honor ——?" said the traveler, bending his vertebral column with so much grace that it seemed to be elastic.

"Yes, monsieur," said the wily dyer, interrupting him with a scrutinizing glance, by which he at once took the measure of the man he had to do with.

"I have come, monsieur," Gaudissart went on, "to request the assistance of your enlightenment to direct me in this district where, as I learn from Mitouflet, you exert the greatest

you will not take m
mercial gentlemen w
win success. I am n
and I glory in it. B
portance, which ough
regard me as devote
countrymen. Be kind
will find that you will
conversation I beg you
have not merely lent t
discreditable speculati
no, nothing of the kin
low myself to engage i
monsieur, the soundest
are concerned in the u
as guarantors——"

And Gaudissart unro
Monsieur Vernier listen
quite deceived the orat
nier had, in fact, cease
was bent on playing hin
kind of Parisian cate
justly regarded as barb
footing there

winding slope, there dwelt, in a little house surrounded by a vineyard, a more than half-crazy creature named Margaritis. This man, an Italian by birth, was married, but had no children, and his wife took care of him with a degree of courage that was universally admired; for Madame Margaritis certainly ran some risk in living with a man who, among other manias, insisted on always having two long knives about him, not unfrequently threatening her with them. But who does not know the admirable devotion with which country people care for afflicted creatures, perhaps in consequence of the discredit that attaches to a middle-class wife if she abandons her child or her husband to the tender mercies of a public asylum? Again, the aversion is well known which country folks feel for paying a hundred louis, or perhaps a thousand crowns, the price charged at Charenton or in a private asylum. If any one spoke to Madame Margaritis of Dubuisson, Esquirol, Blanche, or other mad-doctors, she preferred, with lofty indignation, to keep her three thousand francs and her goodman.

The inexplicable caprices of this worthy's insanity being closely connected with the course of my story, it is needful to mention some of his more conspicuous vagaries. Margaritis would always go out as soon as it began to rain, to walk bareheaded among his vines. Indoors he was perpetually asking for the newspaper; just to satisfy him, his wife or the maidservant would give him an old *Journal d'Indre-et-Loire* and for seven years he had never discovered that it was always the same copy. A doctor might perhaps have found it interesting to note the connection between his attacks of asking for the paper and the variations in the weather. The poor madman's constant occupation was to study the state of the sky and its effect on the vines.

When his wife had company, which was almost every evening—for the neighbors, in pity for her position, came in to play boston with her—Margaritis sat in silence in a corner, never moving; but when ten o'clock struck by a clock in a tall wooden case, he rose at the last stroke with the mechan-

ical precision of the figures moved by a spring in a German toy, went slowly up to the card-players, looked at them with eyes strangely like the automatic gaze of the Greeks and Turks to be seen in the Boulevard du Temple in Paris, and said, "Go away!"

At times, however, this man recovered his natural wits, and could then advise his wife very shrewdly as to the sale of her wine; but at those times he was exceedingly troublesome, stealing dainties out of the cupboards and eating them in secret.

Occasionally when the customary visitors came in, he answered their inquiries civilly, but he more often replied quite at random. To a lady who asked him, "How are you to-day, Monsieur Margaritis?"—"I have shaved," he would reply, "and you?"

"Are you better, monsieur?" another would say. "Jerusalem! Jerusalem!" was the answer. But he usually looked at them with a blank face, not speaking a word, and then his wife would say, "The goodman cannot hear anything to-day." Twice or thrice in the course of five years, always about the

which he then hid without his wife or his servant ever having succeeded, even by watching, in discovering the hiding-place.

The day before Gaudissart's visit to Vouvray, Madame Margaritis had had more difficulty than ever in managing her husband, who had an attack of lucid reason.

"I declare I do not know how I shall get through to-morrow," said she to Madame Vernier. "Only fancy, my old man insisted on seeing his two casks of wine. And he gave me no peace all day till I showed him two full puncheons. Our neighbor, Pierre Champlain, luckily had two casks he had not been able to sell, and at my request he rolled them into our cellar. And then what must he want, after seeing the casks, but nothing will content him but selling them himself."

Madame Vernier had just been telling her husband of this difficult state of things when Gaudissart walked in. At the commercial traveler's very first words Vernier determined to let him loose on old Margaritis.

"Monsieur," replied the dyer, when Gaudissart the Great had exhausted his first broadside, "I will not conceal from you that your undertaking will meet with great obstacles in this district. In our part of the world the good folks go on, bodily, in a way of their own; it is a country where no new idea can ever take root. We live as our fathers did, amusing ourselves by eating four meals a day, occupying ourselves by looking after our vineyards, and selling our wine at a good price. Our notion of business is, very honestly, to sell things for more than they cost. We shall go on in that rut, and neither God nor the devil can get us out of it. But I will give you some good advice, and good advice is worth an eye. We have in this neighborhood a retired banker, in whose judgment I myself have the utmost confidence, and if you win his support you shall have mine. If your proposals offer any substantial prospects, and we are convinced of it, Monsieur Margaritis' vote carries mine with it, and there are twenty well-to-do houses in Vouvray where purses will be opened and your panacea will be tried."

As she heard him mention the madman, Madame Vernier looked up at her husband.

"By the way, I believe my wife was just going to call on Madame Margaritis with a neighbor of ours. Wait a minute, and the ladies will show you the way.—You can go round and pick up Madame Fontanier," said the old dyer with a wink at his wife.

This suggestion that she should take with her the merriest, the most voluble, the most facetious of all the merry wives of Vouvray, was as much as to tell Madame Vernier to secure a witness to report the scene which would certainly take place between the bagman and the lunatic, so as to amuse the country with it for a month to come. Monsieur and Madame Vernier played their parts so well that Gaudissart had no suspicions, and rushed headlong into the snare. He politely offered his arm to Madame Vernier, and fancied he had quite made a conquest of both ladies on the way, being dazzlingly witty, and pelting them with waggery and puns which they did not understand.

The so-called banker lived in the first house at the open-

back. His deep-set eyes, shaded by thick black brows, and with dark rings round them, his nose as thin as the blade of a knife, his high cheek-bones and hollow cheeks, his generally oblong outline—everything, down to his absurdly long flat chin, contributed to give a strange look to his countenance, suggesting that of a professor of rhetoric—or of a rag-picker.

"Monsieur Margaritis," said Madame Vernier, "come, wake up! Here is a gentleman sent to you by my husband, and you are to hear him with attention. Put aside your mathematical calculations and talk to him."

At this speech the madman rose, looked at Gaudissart, waved to him to be seated, and said:

"Let us talk, monsieur."

The three women went into Madame Margaritis' room, leaving the door open so as to hear all that went on, and intervene in case of need. Hardly were they seated when Monsieur Vernier came in quietly from the vineyard, and made them let him in through the window without a sound.

"You were in business, monsieur?" Gaudissart began.

"Public business," replied Margaritis, interrupting him. "I pacified Calabria when Murat was King."

"Heyday, he has been in Calabria now!" said Vernier in a whisper.

"Oh, indeed!" said Gaudissart. "Then, monsieur, we cannot fail to come to an understanding."

"I am listening," replied Margaritis, settling himself in the attitude of a man sitting for his portrait.

"Monsieur," said Gaudissart, fidgeting with his watch key, which he twisted round and round without thinking of what he was doing, with a regular rotary twirl which engaged the madman's attention, and perhaps helped to keep him quiet; "monsieur, if you were not a man of superior intelligence"—Margaritis bowed—"I should restrict myself to setting forth the material advantages of this concern; but its psychological value is worthy of your attention. Mark me! Of all forms of social wealth, time is the most precious; to save time is to grow rich, is it not? Now is there anything

which takes up more time in our lives than anxiety as to what I may call boiling the pot—a homely metaphor, but clearly stating the question? Or is there anything which consumes more time than the lack of a guarantee to offer as security to those of whom you ask money when, though impecunious for a time, you yet are rich in prospects?"

"Money—you have come to the point."

"Well, then, monsieur, I am the emissary to the departments of a company of bankers and capitalists, who have perceived what enormous loss of time, and consequently of productive intelligence and activity, is thus entailed on men with the future before them. Now, the idea has occurred to us that, to such men, we may capitalize the future, we may discount their talents, by discounting what?—why, their time, and securing its value to their heirs. This is not merely to economize time; it is to price it, to value it, to represent in a pecuniary form the products you may expect to obtain in a certain unknown time by representing the moral qualities with which you are gifted, and which are, monsieur, a living force, like a waterfall, or a steam engine of three,

"You are nothing at all," Gaudissart went on, "but you feel yourself——"

"I feel myself," said Margaritis.

"You say to yourself, 'I shall be a Minister'; very good. You, the painter, you, the artist, the man of letters, the future Minister, you calculate your prospects, you value them at so much—you estimate them, let us say—at a hundred thousand crowns——"

"And you have brought me a hundred thousand crowns?" said the lunatic.

"Yes, monsieur, you will see. Either your heirs will get them without fail, in the event of your death, since the company pledges itself to pay, or, if you live, you get them by your works of art or your fortunate speculations. Nay, if you have made a mistake, you can begin all over again. But, when once you have fixed the value, as I have had the honor of explaining to you, of your intellectual capital—for it is intellectual capital, bear that clearly in mind, monsieur——"

"I understand," said the madman.

"You sign a policy of insurance with this company, which credits you with the value of a hundred thousand francs—you, the painter——"

"I am a painter," said Margaritis.

"You, the musician, the Minister—and promises to pay that sum to your family, your heirs, if, in consequence of your demise, the hopes of the income to be derived from your intellectual capital should be lost. The payment of the premium is thus all that is needed to consolidate your——"

"*Your* cash-box," said the madman, interrupting him.

"Well, of course, monsieur; I see that you understand business."

"Yes," said Margaritis, "I was the founder of the Banque Territoriale, Rue des Fossés-Montmartre in Paris, in 1798."

"For," Gaudissart went on, "in order to repay the intellectual capital with which each of us credits himself, must not all who insure pay a certain premium—three per cent, annually three per cent? And thus, by paying a very small

sum, a mere nothing, you are protecting your family against the disastrous effects of your death."

"But I am alive," objected the lunatic.

"Ah, yes, and if you live to be old—that is the objection commonly raised, the objection of the vulgar, and you must see that if we had not anticipated and annihilated it, we should be unworthy to become—what? What are we, in fact?—The book-keepers of the Great Bank of Intellect.

"Monsieur, I do not say this to you; but wherever I go, I meet with men who pretend to teach something new, to bring forward some fresh argument against those who have grown pale with studying the business—on my word of honor, it is contemptible! However, the world is made so, and I have no hope of reforming it.—Your objection, monsieur, is absurd——"

"*Quésaco?* (What!)" said Margaritis.

"For this reason. If you should live, and if you have the money credited to you in your policy of insurance against the chances of death—you follow me——"

"I follow."

made a mistake; I must attack this man on higher ground with palaver A 1," thought Gaudissart.—"Not at all, monsieur," said he aloud. "To you who——"

"Will you take a glass of wine?" asked Margaritis.

"With pleasure," said Gaudissart."

"Wife! give us a bottle of the wine of which two casks are left.—You are here in the headquarters of Vouvray," said the master, pointing to his vines. "The clos Margaritis."

The maid brought in glasses and a bottle of the wine of 1819. The worthy lunatic filled a glass with scrupulous care, and solemnly presented it to Gaudissart, who drank it.

"But you are playing me some trick, monsieur," said the commercial traveler. "This is Madeira, genuine Madeira!"

"I should think it is!" replied the lunatic. "The only fault of the Vouvray wine, monsieur, is that it cannot be used as an *ordinaire,* as a table wine. It is too generous, too strong; and it is sold in Paris as Madeira after being doctored with brandy. Our wine is so rich that many of the Paris merchants, when the French crop is insufficient for Holland and Belgium, buy our wine to mix with the wine grown about Paris, and so manufacture a Bordeaux wine.—But what you are drinking at this moment, my dear and very amiable sir, is fit for a king; it is the head of Vouvray. I have two casks, only two casks of it. Persons who appreciate the finest wines, high-class wines, and like to put a wine on their table which has a character not to be met with in the regular trade, apply direct to us. Now, do you happen to know any one——"

"Let us go back to our business," said Gaudissart.

"We are there, monsieur," replied the madman. "My wine is heady, and you are talking of capital; the etymology of capital is *caput*—head.—Heh?—The Head of Vouvray—the connection is obvious."

"As I was saying," persisted Gaudissart, "either you have realized your intellectual capital——"

"I have realized, monsieur.—Will you take my two puncheons? I will give you favorable terms."

...o, sir. As you k
easily proved."

"In France," said M

"But abroad," said G
clude that part of the qu
abroad, or on the field o

"What do you insure, t
other. "Now, my bank w

"Nothing whatever, si
him. "Nothing whatever
and the passions? But
cases."

"No, we will not discuss

"What, then, is the upsh
Gaudissart. "To you, as
figures.—You have a man,
living on his art—he wants
Civilization at large will r
man, who, in thought, dom
some day dominate over it b
or ideas, or a system. Civil
bread for the great men who
feeds them on abuse and mo
pression is a stro...

"'Gentlemen of the Insurance Company, my life is worth so much; I will pay you so much per cent on my works.'—Well, what do we do? At once, without grudging, we admit him to the splendid banquet of civilization as an important guest——"

"Then you must have wine," said the madman.

"As an important guest. He signs his policy, he takes our contemptible paper rags—mere miserable rags, which, rags as they are, have more power than his genius had. For, in fact, if he wants money, everybody on seeing that sheet of paper is ready to lend to him. On the Bourse, at the bankers', anywhere, even at the money-lenders', he can get money—because he can offer security.—Well, sir, was not this a gulf that needed filling in the social system?

"But, sir, this is but a part of the business undertaken by the Life Insurance Company. We also insure debtors on a different scale of premiums. We offer annuities on terms graduated by age, on an infinitely more favorable calculation than has as yet been allowed in tontines based on tables of mortality now known to be inaccurate. Our Society operating on the mass, our annuitants need have no fear of the reflections that sadden their latter years, in themselves sad enough; such thoughts as must necessarily invade them when their money is in private hands. So, you see, monsieur, we have taken the measure of life under every aspect——"

"Sucked it at every pore," said Margaritis.—"But take a glass of wine; you have certainly earned it. You must lay some velvet on your stomach if you want to keep your jaw in working order. And the wine of Vouvray, monsieur, is, when old enough, pure velvet."

"And what do you think of it all?" said Gaudissart, emptying his glass.

"It is all very fine, very new, very advantageous; but I think better of the system of loans on land that was in use in my bank in the Rue des Fossés-Montmartre."

"There you are right, monsieur," said Gaudissart, "that has been worked and worked out, done and done again. We

now have the Mortgage Society which lends on real estate, and works that system on a large scale. But is not that a mere trifle in comparison with our idea of consolidating possibilities. Consolidating hopes, coagulating—financially—each man's desires for wealth, and securing their realization. It remained for our age, sir, an age of transition—of transition and progress combined!"

"Ay, of progress," said the lunatic. "I like progress, especially such as brings good times for the wine trade——"

"The *Times—le Temps*——!" exclaimed Gaudissart, not heeding the madman's meaning. "A poor paper, sir; if you take it in, I pity you."

"The newspaper?" cried Margaritis. "To be sure, I am devoted to the newspaper.—Wife, wife! where is the newspaper?" he went on, turning towards the door.

"Very good, monsieur; if you take an interest in the papers, we shall certainly agree."

"Yes, yes; but before you hear the paper, confess that this wine is——"

"Delicious," said Gaudissart.

"I know it well," said Margaritis.

"I was sure of it," said Gaudissart. "Monsieur, you have a powerful head—a bump which is known as the equine head. There is something of the horse in the head of every great man. Now a man can be a genius and live unknown. It is a trick that has happened often enough to men who, in spite of their talents, live in obscurity, and which nearly befell the great Saint-Simon and Monsieur Vico, a man of mark who is making his way. He is coming on well is Vico, and I am glad. Here we enter on the new theory and formula of the human race. Attention, monsieur——"

"Attention!" echoed Margaritis.

"The oppression of man by man ought to have ended, monsieur, on the day when Christ—I do not say Jesus Christ, I say Christ—came to proclaim the equality of men before God. But has not this equality been hitherto the most illusory chimera?—Now, Saint-Simon supplements Christ. Christ has served His time——"

"Then, is He released?" asked Margaritis.

"He has served His time from the point of view of Liberalism. There is something stronger to guide us now—the new creed, free and individual creativeness, social co-ordination by which each one shall receive his social reward equitably, in accordance with his work, and no longer be the hireling of individuals who, incapable themselves, make *all* labor for the benefit of one alone. Hence the doctrine——"

"And what becomes of the servants?" asked Margaritis.

"They remain servants, monsieur, if they are only capable of being servants."

"Then of what use is the doctrine?"

"Oh, to judge of that, monsieur, you must take your stand on the highest point of view whence you can clearly command a general prospect of humanity. This brings us to Ballanche! Do you know Monsieur Ballanche?"

"It is my principal business," said the madman, who misunderstood the name for *la planche* (boards or staves).

"Very good," said Gaudissart. "Then, sir, if the palin-

genesis and successive developments of the spiritualized Globe touch you, delight you, appeal to you,—then, my dear sir, the newspaper called the *Globe,* a fine name, accurately expressing its mission—the *Globe* is the *cicerone* who will explain to you every morning the fresh conditions under which, in quite a short time, the world will undergo a political and moral change."

"*Quésaco?*" said Margaritis.

"I will explain the argument by a simile," said Gaudissart. "If, as children, our nurses took us to Séraphin, do not we older men need a presentment of the future?—These gentlemen——"

"Do they drink wine?"

"Yes, monsieur. Their house is established, I may say, on an admirable footing—a prophetic footing; handsome receptions, all the bigwigs, splendid parties."

"To be sure," said the madman, "the laborers who pull down must be fed as well as those who build."

"All the more so, monsieur, when they pull down with one hand and build up with the other, as the apostles of the *Globe*

"You have realized the vast proportions of the *Globe?*"

"Twice—on foot."

Gaudissart did not heed him; he was entangled in the maze of his own thoughts, and listening to his own words, assured of success.

"Well, seeing the position you hold, I can understand that at your age you have nothing to insure. But, monsieur, you can persuade those persons in this district to insure who, either by their personal merits or by the precarious position of their families, may be anxious to provide for the future. And so, if you will subscribe to the *Globe,* and if you will give me the support of your authority in this district to invite the investment of capital in annuities—for annuities are popular in the provinces—well, we may come to an agreement as to the purchase of the two casks of wine.—Will you take in the *Globe?*"

"I live on the globe."

"Will you support me with the influential residents in the district?"

"I support——"

"And——"

"And?——"

"And I—— But you will pay your subscription to the *Globe?*"

"The *Globe*—a good paper—an annuity?"

"An annuity, monsieur?—Well, yes, you are right; for it is full of life, of vitality, and learning; choke full of learning; a handsome paper, well printed, a good color, thick paper. Oh, it is none of your flimsy shoddy, mere waste-paper that tears if you look at it. And it goes deep, gives you reasoning that you may think over at leisure, and pleasant occupation here in the depths of the country."

"That is the thing for me," said the madman.

"It costs a mere trifle—eighty francs a year."

"That is not the thing for me," said Margaritis.

"Monsieur," said Gaudissart, "of course you have little children?"

"And you consent to st
"Round the district."
"I have your approbati
"You have."
"Well, then, sir, I will
hundred francs——"
"No, no, a hundred and
"Monsieur, a hundred a
ten, but it is a hundred
paper and one hundred to
me a commission."
"A hundred and twenty
commissioners."
"Very neat. And not o
"No, spirituous."
"Better and better—like
"That is my way," said
my vineyards?"
"With pleasure," said
strangely to the head."
And Gaudissart the Gre
garitis, who led him from
vine.

"Why did your good man take him out of hearing?" said Vernier. At last Margaritis came in again with the commercial traveler; they were both walking at a great pace as if in a hurry to conclude the business.

"And the countryman, I bet, has been too many for the Parisian," said Vernier.

In point of fact, Gaudissart the Great, sitting at one end of the card-table, to the great delight of Margaritis, wrote an order for the delivery of two casks of wine. Then, after reading through the contract, Margaritis paid him down seven francs as a subscription to the children's paper.

"Till to-morrow, then, monsieur," said Gaudissart the Great, twisting his watch-key; "I shall have the honor of calling for you to-morrow. You can send the wine to Paris direct to the address I have given you, and forward it as soon as you receive the money."

Gaudissart was from Normandy; there were two sides to every bargain he made, and he required an agreement from Monsieur Margaritis, who with a madman's glee in gratifying his favorite whim, signed, after reading, a contract to deliver two casks of wine of *Clos Margaritis*.

So Gaudissart went off in high spirits, humming *Le roi des mers, prends plus bas,* to the *Golden Sun* Inn, where he naturally had a chat with the host while waiting for dinner. Mitouflet was an old soldier, simple but cunning, as peasants are, but never laughing at a joke, as being a man who is accustomed to the roar of cannon, and to passing a jest in the ranks.

"You have some very tough customers hereabouts," said Gaudissart, leaning against the door-post and lighting his cigar at Mitouflet's pipe.

"How is that?" asked Mitouflet.

"Well, men who ride roughshod over political and financial theories."

"Whom have you been talking to, if I may make so bold?" asked the innkeeper guilelessly, while he skilfully expectorated after the manner of smokers.

propaganda in one of the most jovial districts of France, and at the same time the least open to new ideas.

On his return from his tour in the southern provinces, Gaudissart the Great was traveling in the coupé of the Laffite-Caillard diligence, and had for a fellow-passenger a young man to whom, having passed Angoulême, he condescended to expatiate on the mysteries of life, fancying him, no doubt, but a baby.

On reaching Vouvray, the youth exclaimed:

"What a lovely situation!"

"Yes, monsieur," said Gaudissart, "but the land is uninhabitable by reason of the inhabitants. You would have a duel on your hands every day. Why only three months ago I fought on that very spot"—and he pointed to the bridge—"with a confounded dyer—pistols; but—I fleeced him!"

PARIS, *November* 1832.